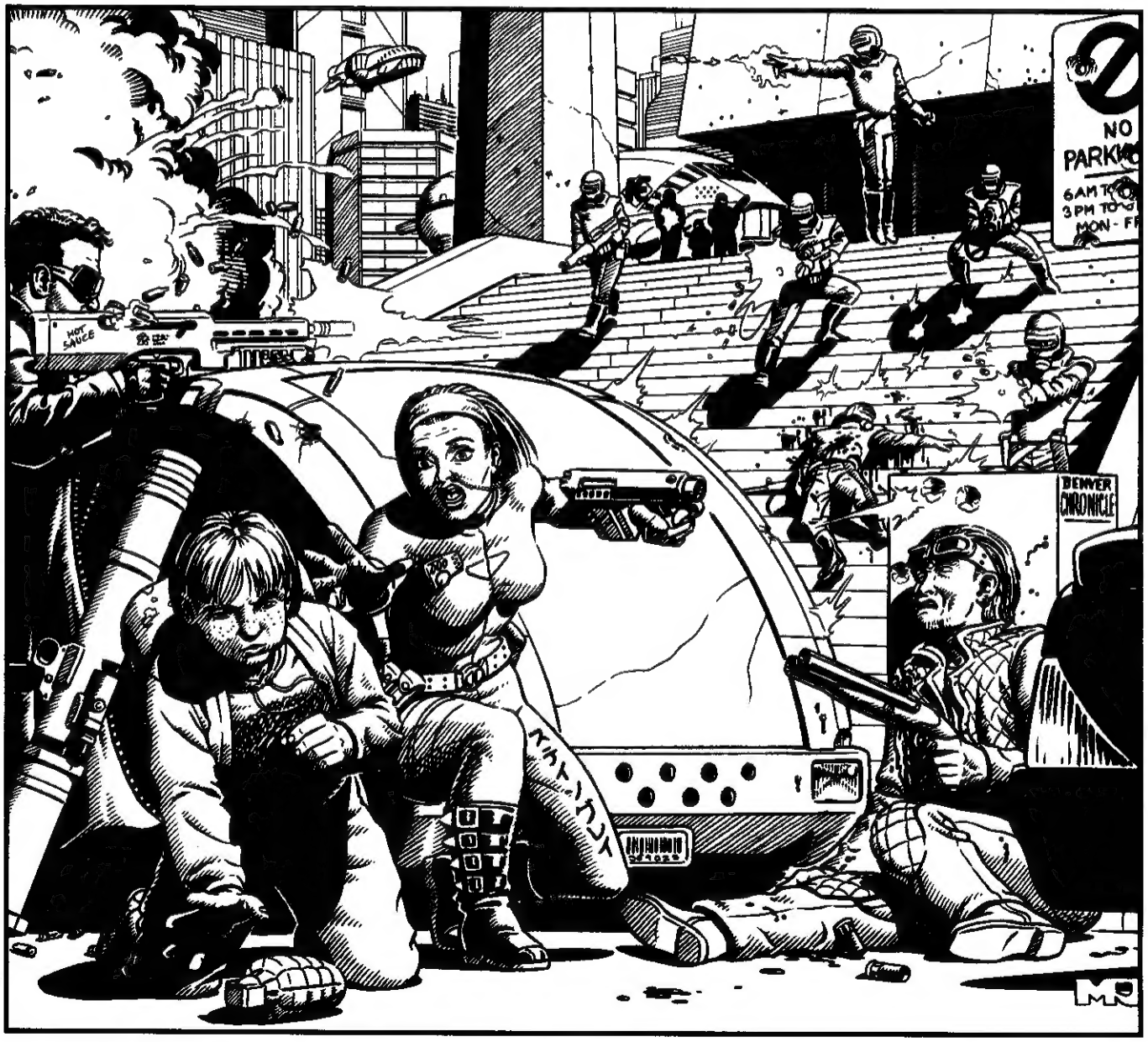
DIVIDED ASSETS™



FASA CORPORATION

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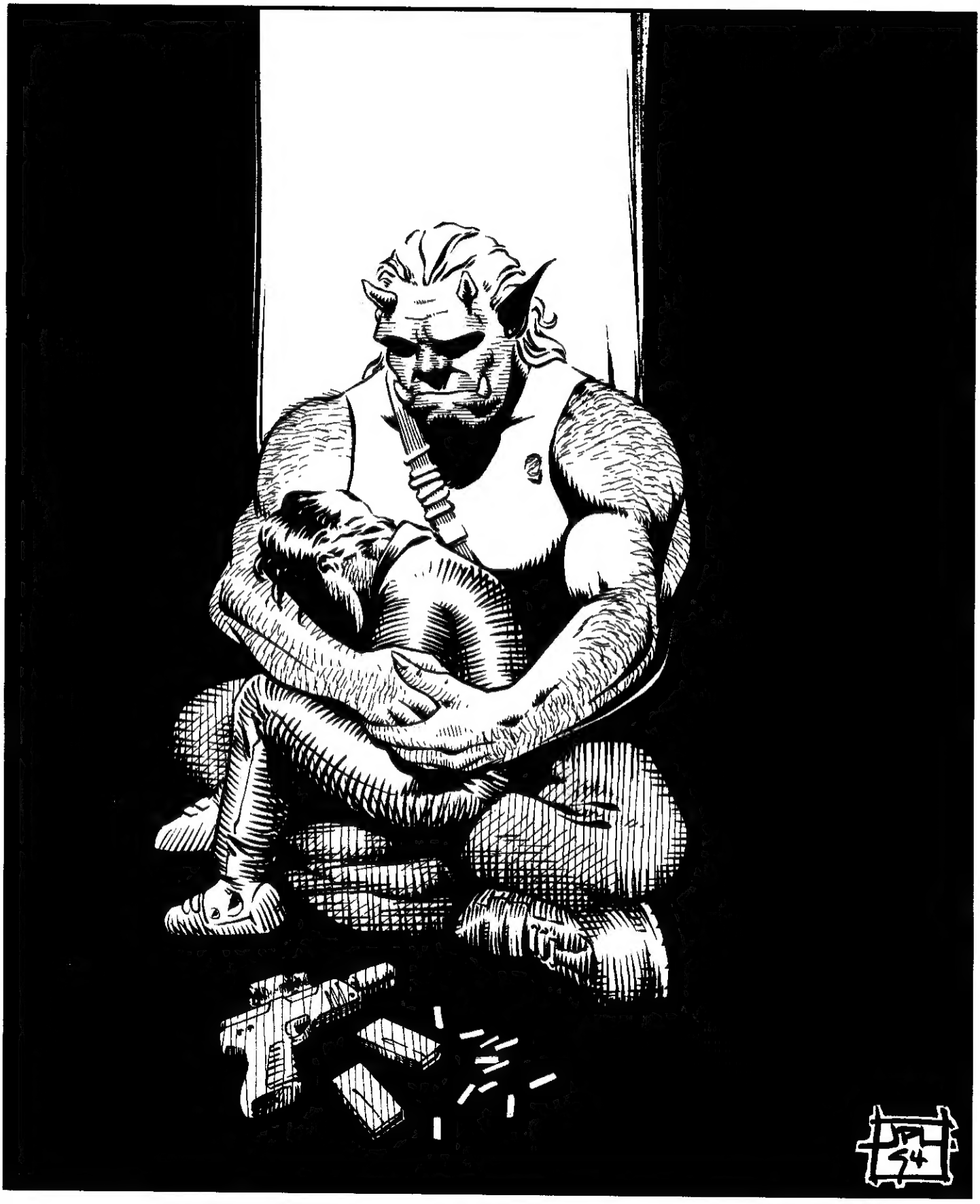


INTRODUCTION

Divided Assets is a roleplaying adventure set in the Awakened world of **Shadowrun.**

The year is 2055. Advances in technology are astonishing, with humans able to blend with computers and travel through the virtual reality known as the Matrix. Even more astonishing is the return of magic. Elves, dwarfs, dragons, orks, and trolls have reassumed their true forms, while megacorporations (rather than superpowers) rule much of the world. Moving through this world like whispers in the night are the shadowrunners. No one admits their existence, but no one else can do their secret work.

This adventure takes place in the Front Range Free Zone, more commonly known as Denver. Denver is a city of shadows, ruled by six different nations and entangled in the continual struggles of those and even greater powers. It is a city of chaos, at the place where the Great Plains of North America crash headlong into the towering Rocky Mountains. It is a place of transition, contrast, and conflict.

GAMEMASTERING NOTES

Divided Assets takes place in the city of Denver, which is described in the **Shadowrun** boxed set, **Denver: City of Shadows**. The story can be adapted to take place anywhere, but doing so requires additional work on the part of the gamemaster. This book assumes that the gamemaster has **Denver: City of Shadows** and the two volumes included in that boxed set: **Denver** and the **Denver Gamemasters Book (Denver GM).**

Unlike most previous **Shadowrun** adventures, the plot of **Divided Assets** does not lend itself to a decision-tree format. Because it is impossible to predict how different groups of player characters will solve the adventure's central and peripheral puzzles, this adventure sets up the story in the first encounter. The series of encounters that follows describes each of the principal locations where events in the story may occur. The adventure ends with several encounters that describe the possible actions and reactions of non-player characters and groups and examine the directions the player characters might take. The **Plot Synopsis** on p. 6 of this section presents the most likely course of events, though certainly not the only possible one.

To run this adventure, the gamemaster needs a thorough familiarity with the material in this book, as well as a working knowledge of the **Shadowrun, Second Edition (SRII)** rules and the information contained in the **Denver: City of Shadows** boxed set. Except for material designated **Player Handouts,** the contents of this book are for the gamemaster's eyes only.

Divided Assets is designed for a team of five to six shadowrunners with a variety of talents, including at least one magician. A decker will also be useful, though the decking in this adventure can be done by a non-player character if necessary.

SHADOWRUN RULES

Divided Assets uses the **Shadowrun, Second Edition (SRII)** rules. All game information, specifically statistics, appears in the **SRII** format. Gamemasters still using the first-edition rules will need to make a few adjustments, mostly to non-player character, weapon and spell statistics.

MAKING SUCCESS TESTS

During the course of **Divided Assets,** the runners will need to make a number of Success Tests using a skill and a given target number. These tests are indicated by the name of the appropriate skill, followed by the target number in parentheses. For example, a Sorcery (5) Test refers to a Sorcery Success Test against a Target Number of 5.

SUCCESS TABLES

At times, the gamemaster will use success tables to determine how much information the players receive. Each success table lists information obtained for different numbers of die roll successes. Rolling a high number of successes always reveals the information for the lower numbers of successes as well. For example, a player who rolls 3 successes would learn the information for 3 successes and also the information for 1 and 2 successes.

DECKING

To reduce the time required to resolve decking sequences in **Divided Assets,** the book provides a variation on the standard **Shadowrun** decking rules. Instead of the system map usually presented in **Shadowrun** adventures, decking encounters in **Divided Assets** offer the gamemaster a rough description of the system in question and the various obstacles the runner must overcome to obtain the information or accomplish the action he or she desires. Gamemasters who prefer standard decking should feel free to build an appropriate system map, populate it with IC, and run the decker player-character through it.

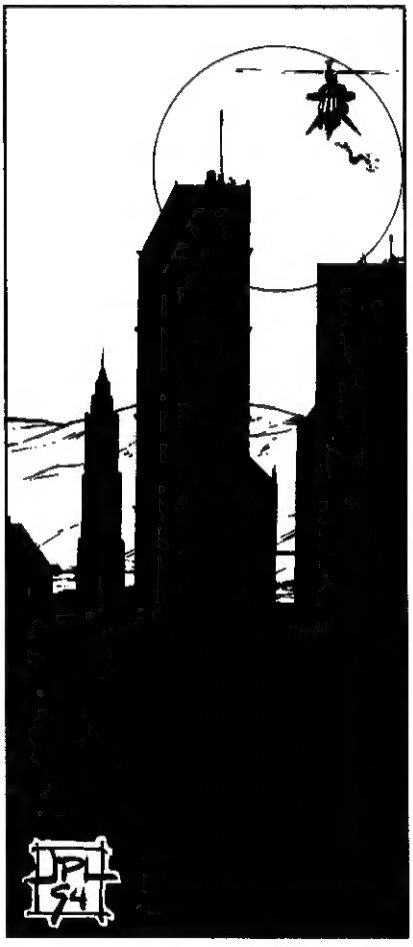
See the **Layered Matrix System** section, p. 62, for more information.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Aside from the basic **Shadowrun, Second Edition (SRII)** rules, this book and the **Denver: City of Shadows** boxed set include everything needed to run this adventure. The

gamemaster may also find **Shadowbeat** particularly useful, specifically its information on news media in the **Shadowrun** universe. Gamemasters may also find **The Grimoire, Second Edition (Grimoire II)** and the **Rigger Black Book (RBB)** helpful.

Before beginning the game, the gamemaster should read through the entire adventure to familiarize himself with the story line. Some important plot developments may not become apparent to the player characters until well into the adventure, but the gamemaster needs to lay the groundwork for those developments much earlier in the story. The gamemaster should also examine the maps, plans, diagrams, and player handouts included in **Divided Assets.** Where appropriate, numbers and/or letters on the maps link each area to its description in the text.



Though this book tries to cover all the likely—and even some of the unlikely—things that can happen during the adventure, foreseeing every possible plan of action the players may choose to take is impossible. To deal with unexpected actions, the gamemaster must be prepared to improvise if necessary. The **Plot Synopsis** later in this section summarizes the story background in detail and describes the most probable course of the adventure. Within the synopsis, the first mention of the names of characters important to the story appears in **boldface** type.

The adventure begins with **See It Now**, a news broadcast that occurs some time before the actual beginning of the adventure. The broadcast sets up the story's background for the runners. The encounter entitled **A Simple Hire** actually starts the ball rolling, as a pair of Johnsons tap the player characters for what they describe as "a simple job." These two encounters provide background for the adventure and replace the Prologue usually found in **Shadowrun** adventures. The remaining encounters describe various locations and the potential actions of the adventure's non-player characters. Depending on the choices the player characters make, each encounter may or may not advance the runners toward their goal. Each encounter is divided into four brief sections, entitled **Tell It To Them Straight, Hooks, Behind the Scenes,** and **Debugging.**

Tell It to Them Straight is read aloud to the players. It describes where the player characters are and what is happening to them as though they were actually there. In **Divided Assets,** the gamemaster will frequently need to adapt the text in this section to special situations or the actions of the shadowrunners. Any special instructions to the gamemaster appear in **boldface** type.

The next section, **Hooks**, gives the gamemaster hints and tips about imagery to use in the scene, emotions to convey, sounds, sensations, textures, and so on. The information provided in the **Hooks** section varies in form and content from scene to scene, ranging from general themes to specific emotions.

The real story exists in **Behind the Scenes**, and only the gamemaster knows what is really going on in each encounter. This section describes the intentions and actions of the major non-player characters and presents extra information that the player characters can find if they do a little digging for clues. If a map is needed to play an encounter, it appears in this section. Game statistics for minor non-player characters are also included, as are suggestions for handling the particular elements of each encounter.

The final section, **Debugging**, provides suggestions for getting the game back on track if things go too far wrong—if the player characters overlook a vital piece of data, for example, or if half the team meets an untimely death. They are, however, only suggestions. If the gamemaster can think of a better method of redirecting the game, he should feel free to use it. The gamemaster can also ignore these suggestions and let the chips fall where they may.

Several sections in the back of the book provide additional information for the gamemaster. **Picking Up the Pieces** provides tips on wrapping up the adventure and awarding Karma. The **Legwork** section contains information about people, places, and events that the player characters can learn from their contacts or through public data networks throughout the adventure. **Cast of Shadows** describes all the major NPCs in **Divided Assets** and lists their game statistics. **Player Handout** includes a detailed datafile for the player characters describing the shadowrun and the major NPCs involved. A timeline of the adventure's events and a map of the various sites where those events occur is included for the gamemaster's convenience in the back of this book. Finally, the **Layered Matrix System** section offers rules for a variation on the standard decking procedure.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Creating a published adventure that provides the appropriate level of opposition for every diverse group of player characters is impossible. Some groups are inherently more powerful than others.

To remedy this, gamemasters may wish to adjust the game statistics and capabilities of the opposition to provide an appropriate level of difficulty for their groups. If the adventure does not suit the player characters' strengths and weaknesses, the gamemaster may use it as an outline to develop an adventure of his own. Or, if it works well except for a tweak needed here and there, the gamemaster can change any part of the plot and story events to make the adventure a better one for his group of players.

The adventure suggests Threat and Professional Ratings for each of the non-player characters. Per **SRII** rules, use Threat Rating dice in place of Dice Pools for these characters (p. 187,

SRII). Gamemasters may adjust the actual Threat Ratings to better reflect the level of opposition presented by the player characters (see **Threat Ratings,** p. 48 of **Cast of Shadows**).

Such manipulation will be crucial to running some of the firefights in this adventure at a manageable level. The fights in **Divided Assets** work best if choreographed like an action movie. Though lead and magic fly everywhere, only a few of the bad guys actually get a clean shot at the heroes at any one time. That limitation, and applying the **SRII** Professional Rating rules, should help keep large fights under control.

For gamemasters using the first-edition **Shadowrun** rules, the Professional Rating system works as follows. Non-player characters with a Professional Rating of 1 will withdraw from a fight after taking a Light Wound. Those Rated at 2 will withdraw after taking a Moderate wound; those Rated at 3, after a Serious wound. Those Rated at 4 will fight until unconscious or dead.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Divided Assets revolves around the dysfunctional family of **Colin Gaffney**, his wife **Anna Coleridge-Gaffney**, and their eight-year-old son, **Shawn Gaffney**. Neither of Shawn's parents has any real time for him, and their marriage is loveless. Colin Gaffney finally seeks to leave both his family and his position at **Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services (FAFS)** by accepting a job with another company, **Dassurn Securities and Investments (DSI)**.

During DSI's daring extraction, however, Shawn Gaffney blunders in and tries to leave with his father. Colin Gaffney gets away, but his son and one of the shadowrunners employed by DSI are left hanging dozens of stories over the streets of Chicago. The media goes nuts over this very public event, while Shawn is left devastated and confused by the terrifying experience and his father's stark rejection of him.

A few months later, **Corporation X** decides to "acquire" Anna Coleridge from FAFS. (The corp's real name doesn't matter; every corp in the world pulls the same kind of nasty buildrek. In fact, the runners *can't* find out who Corp X really is. That ought to drive 'em crazy.) Believing that Anna will reject a simple offer to switch jobs, Corp X's personnel arrange to kidnap Anna's son and use him as a lure. The runners enter this morass as the employees of Corp X, hired to extract Shawn from FAFS and keep him safe until negotiations with his mother are complete.

A pair of mysterious Johnsons hire the runners to travel to the Front Range Free Zone, the area around Denver. There, a local fixer and Johnson by the name of **Jack Drew** contacts them; he will act as their local supplier and arranger. He tells them their target is young Shawn Gaffney, son of corporate defector Colin Gaffney and his wife Anna, who remains with Colin Gaffney's original employer. The runners, most likely assuming they are working for the corporation that extracted the elder Gaffney (DSI), must plan the whens, wheres, and hows of Shawn's kidnapping. It can occur at or near the condo he and his mother share in the exclusive **Brandis Development** in the Sioux Nation Sector; the elite **Shining Bright School** he attends in the Pueblo Corporate Council Sector; the office of his therapist, **Dr. Martin Singtree,** in the UCAS Sector; or any one of a number of potentially vulnerable spots. The runners must plan and execute their grab with as little flash and chaos as possible—Shawn has already suffered emotional harm from the events surrounding his father's extraction, and no one wishes to do him more damage.

Once the runners have the boy, they must keep him safe for an indeterminate number of days until other parts of the plan unknown to them are carried out. The runners believe that the corporation that they suspect hired them, Dassurn Securities, has made or is making arrangements to "forward" young Shawn to Seattle to be with his father. In reality, Corporation X is negotiating with the boy's mother for her services. During the few days she takes to decide, the runners get to know Shawn a little better and learn that all is not well with him. If they are observant, they notice both his detachment and clear signs of emotional abuse. If they are on the ball, they will swiftly realize that returning Shawn to either of his parents might not be in the boy's best interests.

On the last day, Anna Coleridge decides not to take Corp X's offer. The corp, via Jack Drew, informs the runners that the job is over and tells them to cut the boy loose. What the runners choose to do with Shawn is entirely up to them.

RUNNING DIVIDED ASSETS

Divided Assets is a different kind of **Shadowrun** adventure. The story is not about big guns and powerful magic. This story revolves around the human factor in the ongoing corp war for supremacy and may force the player characters to face an issue they rarely consider: what happens to the people left behind in a corporate extraction? This time, the runners take the life and emotional health of a young boy into their hands, and the challenge the runners face is not kidnapping the boy—it's deciding what to do with him once they recognize his emotional state. That question has no simple answer, and gamemasters should not create one unless absolutely necessary. A neglected, emotionally abused child ends up in the runners' laps, and they must decide if they wish to return him to the parents who caused this damage—or, if not, what alternative they can offer.

The gamemaster needs to keep the unique, problem-solving nature of **Divided Assets** in mind when running the adventure. The players should become gradually aware of the boy's precarious emotional state. Don't cram it down their throats with theatrics; let them discover it through subtle hints and clues. Of course, some groups of players may not care much for subtlety, and so individual gamemasters must make plot-altering choices based on the attitudes of the group playing the adventure.

Because any given group of players can take **Divided Assets** in so many different directions, much of the adventure is presented in a sketchy, guideline format. Gamemasters are encouraged to expand encounters, fill in blanks, add plot elements, and flesh the story out either beforehand or once the runners' choices become clear. That Shawn Gaffney's fate lies in the runners' hands, however, should remain paramount.

SEE IT NOW

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Adapt the following text to reflect the runners' whereabouts when they see this news report.

Audrey W. is one of the hottest things on trid these days, and her new ultra-popular news-magazine show, *The All-Seeing Eye*, is pulling in huge instant ratings all across North America. She's talented all right; she can cut straight to the heart of the matter with a penetrating question or a revealing piece of footage. And she's always so cool, so sharp, that just seeing her on the street or in a restaurant has reputedly caused even the most hardened corp executive or politician to break out in a sweat. Tonight, you can feel her anger shooting off the screen.

As always, she stands on her custom virtual set, clad in one of her trademark, chic Abandallo business suits. The show's last segment, something boring about toxic agents present in the latest fad food additive, was uninspired—then the image cuts back to her, and you can practically see lightning.

"What you are about to see," she says in a voice brimming with barely contained fury, "represents the utter disdain felt by certain elements of society for the rest of us who inhabit the sprawl." Wiz, you think, another slam on the megacorporate fiend of the week. Those are always fun.

The image changes to a sharp, professional trideo view of a gleaming corporate spire. Recognizing a few of the buildings around it, you place it in Chicago. The point of view rotates slowly around the base of the building, showing all sides, and you wonder for a moment if it's real or a detailed computer simulation. "We all know about inter-corporate competition," Audrey's voice continues, "and if you've watched this show before, you know all about the illegal extremes one corp will go to just to gain an advantage over another. Theft of assets is common, be they data files, hardware, software, development models, prototypes or people."

The image changes again, this time to a fuzzy, bouncy, hand-held camera image of the side of the building taken from maybe thirty or forty stories in the air. The camera pans suddenly and tilts downward. You see a window blown outward, from which a simple mechanical device has unfolded itself into the open air. You recognize it as a typical skyscraper emergency escape system, usually used when there's a fire or some other calamity that requires rapid evacuation. A few key locations on each floor, sometimes on every other floor, mount these devices behind a protected wall section; they can be triggered manually or automatically by the building's security or environmental systems. The escape system's high-speed descending cables lower office workers to safety.

As you watch, the first high-speed cable begins to deploy. A woman in what appears to be a corporate security uniform steps out of the window, holding on to a man in a dark, casual corporate suit. The two begin a quick drop to the street below. Seconds later, another figure emerges from the window attached to another cable, but he's got a young boy with him who doesn't seem to be attached properly. The cable jerks and the two tumble, falling a story or two until the line yanks them to a halt. The only thing keeping the boy from plunging to his death is the man holding him. The image freezes on the screaming boy, clawing desperately for a hand-hold on the man's body. Throughout all this, Audrey's harsh voice-over continues.

"What you are seeing occurred only a few hours ago in the downtown core of Chicago. The building belongs to Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services, as does the first man being taken from it—Colin Gaffney." A small picture-in-picture box appears showing a clearer view of the man in the dark business suit. He appears anxious, but not particularly alarmed. "The young boy, hanging on for his life, is Colin Gaffney's son, eight-year-old Shawn Gaffney." A similar picture-box appears showing a computer-enhanced close-up of the terrified boy.

"The other two are both so-called 'shadowrunners,' the self-proclaimed 'Robin Hoods' of the underworld. Here, you see them as they truly are—vicious, careless criminals with no concerns except for the blood money paid them to perform such heinous acts as this."

The trideo resumes moving, with Shawn and the unknown shadowrunner twisting together, limbs and possible fates entwined. The man keeps yanking the cable, barely holding on to the boy, and looking up at the descent mechanism. But the two of them aren't going anywhere. The cable is tangled and jammed, leaving them hanging. A pair of security guards appear at the broken window, guns pointed down at the runner and the child. The trideo image freezes again and Audrey W. steps in front of it, her eyes blazing.

"Twenty-seven minutes later, the Chicago fire department finally rescued the shadowrunner and the boy. Shawn Gaffney, unconscious from overwhelming terror, was taken to a local hospital for observation. The shadowrunner was taken into custody by Eagle Security and is reportedly being interrogated about the incident. Of course, we all know we'll never hear the real truth. The bond of the streets is too strong to permit a shadowrunner's loose tongue, and the will of their corporate masters too powerful to allow public exposure of 'business as usual.'

"What we have seen here, ladies and gentlemen, occurs every day in the corporate world. It's called an extraction, and it involves tearing a human being—allegedly a corporate

asset—and his or her family from the only world they know, often without their permission or with any concern for their safety, all for sake of the almighty bottom line.

"And the cost?" Audrey W. turns toward the image and carefully reaches out as if to place her hand on the frozen figure of Shawn Gaffney. The image tracks in to a close-up of the kid. "The cost is paid not in corporate stock, but in blood and tears. It is paid in the emotional wounds inflicted on a child, lost between a father fled beyond his reach and a corporate home that may no longer want him. He pays the price for choices in which he had no say.

"Shawn Gaffney is resting now in a local private hospital, under a family doctor's care. His physical wounds are superficial. But his emotional scars undoubtedly run deep and may never heal."

The image changes, back to Audrey W. in her virtual set. Her arms are crossed, her face determined and angry. "But we at *The All-Seeing Eye* won't let it rest there. We'll follow this story and find out who's responsible. And we'll make sure that somebody, somewhere, pays."

A commercial appears—impossibly blond bimbos giggling and jiggling as they hawk their wares. It's impossible to tell what the product is, but no one cares.

HOOKS

Build some sympathy for the poor, frightened boy dangling dozens of stories above Seattle's streets. That kind of situation would terrify almost any adult, let alone an eight-year-old boy.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Present the news trideo of the botched extraction at Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services to the player characters some time before the actual story of **Divided Assets** begins, preferably during an unconnected adventure. Take care, however, that the player characters do not get distracted by the news report and assume that it has to do with the story they're currently involved in. If all else fails, just tell the players not to worry about the events of the news report—yet. Players and characters alike should remember seeing the trideo report once **Divided Assets** actually gets going. As a rough estimate, two months of game-time (time in the **Shadowrun** world) should be sufficient for this adventure's various plot elements to align themselves properly.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?

Dassurn Securities and Investments hired a shadowrun team to extract Colin Gaffney from Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services. Everything was going well until Shawn stumbled onto the extraction and decided *he* wanted to go too. Colin Gaffney did not want his son to accompany him, and so he and the team attempted to leave the boy behind.

Shawn, however, had other ideas—if he couldn't go, then neither could his father. Shawn triggered the internal security alarms, just as all the training drills had taught him to, and forced the shadowrunners inside the skyscraper to find an alternate means of escape. They chose the building's emergency evacuation system. When they blew the window to begin the quick descent to the streets, Shawn threw himself into the arms of the last shadowrunner. The two became tangled in the descent cable, caught between floors and unable to move. As the other shadowrunner and Shawn's father quickly and safely dropped to the street below, Shawn and the shadowrunner hung high overhead, literally twisting in the wind.

The captured shadowrunner told Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services nothing they couldn't have figured out for themselves with a little legwork. Despite the shadowrunner's denial, the corp executives believe Shawn Gaffney was one of the targets of the extraction. Shawn himself, still prone to nightmares about the incident, is furious at his father for not taking him away. He is equally angry at his mother, who seems to have even less time for or interest in him than before.

Immediately following the incident, *The All-Seeing Eye* attempts to follow up on the fate of young Shawn Gaffney. Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services acts decidedly uncooperative and refuses to assist the news program in its efforts. Audrey W., however, persists until Fuchs-Auberlien complains publicly about her harassment of the family and the corp. On-air reports cease shortly afterward, but Audrey W. continues to quietly keep an eye on the situation and the boy. When the runners eventually grab him, she'll be prepared to swoop in. Shawn himself has seen none of the news reports; all the information that reaches him at Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services is filtered by his mother and his corporate guardians.

Meanwhile, Colin Gaffney begins settling in at the company where he thinks he really wants to be, Dassurn Securities and Investments. Anna Coleridge-Gaffney continues her work at Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services, but she and her son are transferred to a supposedly more secure corporate site in Denver. And Shawn Gaffney waits for the day when he'll be free from it all.

ABOUT THE ESCAPE SYSTEM

Players always looking for an edge will undoubtedly take an interest in the emergency escape system described in **Tell It To Them Straight**. Many, but not all, corporate skyscrapers incorporate these systems, and most have installed complex, high-security safeguards to prevent the emergeny escape systems from being used for extractions. The system can be stopped in mid-descent, by use of computer-controlled access, to leave intrepid runners dangling high above the street. Controls for ascent and descent are found in protected slave module nodes directly adjacent to and accessible only through the security subprocessor, which usually is not connected to the Matrix. Most corps prefer to connect the cable controls to an autonomous system not tied in to the building's primary computer system.

DEBUGGING

Because nothing happens in this encounter other than the player characters seeing a news report on the trideo, nothing really can go wrong. Go to **A Simple Hire**, p. 9.

A SIMPLE HIRE

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Read this to the player whose character attends the first meeting with the Johnsons:

Across an expanse of grassy park, two dogs bark territorial warnings at each other. Their owners, casting admiring looks at each other, yank the dogs on their separate ways. Your gaze drifts across the assortment of humanity assembled here on this sunny, cool afternoon. All sit quietly, ignorant of who you are and why you're here. All but one, that is.

You spot the man you're looking for seated on the edge of a worn bench on the far side of a near-stagnant pool. He throws handfuls of seeds from a plastic bag into the air. Dozens of almost-white and mottled-gray pigeons and other birds swoop for their feed. You jander carelessly over to him.

He's a small man, slight of build with a thin face, flat features, and a complexion that nearly matches the cream color of his suit. His hair, blond but graying, is thinning. The only thing about him you might say you admire is the fine gold curves and matte-black lenses of his terrifyingly expensive sunglasses. In a part of town not far from here, whole families have died for sunglasses that cost half as much as these.

Without breaking the easy motion of his throw, he turns his head slightly and nods toward the seat next to him. You sit. Some of the birds eye you suspiciously. The man pauses a moment as if to gather his thoughts, and then says, "Prompt. I like that." He ceases throwing, reaches into the pocket of his sport jacket and pulls out a small gray-and-white datachip that he hands to you. "All the information you need is on that chip," he says. He resumes tossing seed, much to the delight of the birds. "Review it. Do what research you need to and come back this time tomorrow. I or someone like me will meet you to discuss particulars."

You know he's finished. He doesn't say so, nor does any body language communicate that. But still, you know. You watch the birds for a minute or two, then heave yourself off the bench and head home to review the chip.

Read the following to the player whose character attends the second meet:

Chill rain patters steadily down—the park is nearly empty. Your contact is waiting on the park bench on the far side of the pool. Splatters of rain break up her reflection in the water.

Yes, most definitely her. She's tall and of medium but shapely build, with bobbed black hair that almost brushes the collar of her cream-colored business suit. Like the Johnson from the day before, she's pale and she wears the same brand of expensive sunglasses. Wherever they're from, they don't get out in the sun much. She holds a white umbrella over her head—without having seen it, you're certain she used a fresh white handkerchief to clean the rainwater from the bench before she sat down.

As you approach, she acknowledges you with a slight nod. You sit. She turns slightly toward you and for a moment you catch a glimpse of a fine, gold datajack hidden under the hair behind her ear. She almost smiles.

"Well?" she asks. "Will you do it?"

HOOKS

Make the meetings with the two Johnsons casual and without stress. The setting on both days is a far cry from the loud, smoky, intrusive bars and nightclubs in which meets usually go down. Emphasize the calmness of the surroundings. Let the players know up front that this adventure has a different feel than most.

BEHIND THE SCENES

As stated in **See It Now** (p. 7), nothing happens concerning the extraction of Colin Gaffney and the fate of his wife and son for at least two months. After that time, things have calmed down enough so that Fuchs-Auberlien's various security forces are probably beginning to relax. Corporation X, another corporation that badly wants Anna Coleridge-Gaffney's talents, chooses this time to strike.

Executives of Corporation X believe that Anna will not leave the secure haven of Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services for money, security, or position. They therefore decide to try another motivator—extortion. They plan to kidnap her son, Shawn, and use him as a bargaining chip. This simple plan has worked for many corps, many times in many other places. To pull it off, however, Corp X must play its cards just right.

First, Corp X needs shadowrunners. One of the player characters—the one with the highest reputation, if those optional rules are being used (see p. 199, **SRII**)—hears from a fixer or a trusted contact that someone's hiring for an out-of-town job and the runner's name came up. The contact has no specifics, just a request to arrange a meeting. The Johnson will set the time and place; the runner need only attend.

The Johnson requests to meet with *one* runner, not a small army. The Johnson wants a casual meeting, out in the open and in public, no stress, no strain. The presence of more than one runner will annoy the Johnson; during negotiations for payment, increase the target number for the Negotiation Test by +1 for every two extra shadowrunners.

THE FIRST JOHNSON

The initial contact described in **Tell It To Them Straight** is simply a preliminary meeting in which the Johnson gives the runner a standard 5-Mp mini-datachip. Because this Johnson does not know what is on the chip, he does not mention that the chip contains information that, if leaked to Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services, could destroy any current or future attempts to extract Shawn Gaffney. (Of course, should the runner or a teammate turn over the data to Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services, the runners will find their reps in the toilet and their ability to obtain future work severely impaired.)

If the runner attempts to read the chip in the park, the Johnson will put his hand on the runner's arm and shake his head. "Best you read it elsewhere," he says, "somewhere comfortable where you can think about what it says." He refuses to discuss who hired or sent him and what may or may not be on the chip.

Once the runner examines the data on the chip, give that player the **Player Handout** on page 57.

THE SECOND JOHNSON

The Johnson that the runner meets on the following day knows the specifics of the mission and can negotiate payment based on the information provided on the chip. Assume that she has all average Attributes for a typical human (straight 3s), except for Intelligence and Charisma 4 and Willpower 5. Her Negotiation Skill is 7. She has no weapons, armor, or any other gear, except for a trimline pocket phone.

This Johnson is prepared to pay 50,000 nuyen to the team that accomplishes the mission. Have the runner make an opposed Negotiation (Willpower) Test if he or she wants a higher fee. Every success the runner achieves adds 2,500 nuyen to the fee; every success the Johnson achieves reduces the fee by 2,500 nuyen. Ties do not change the amount. Feel free to change or adjust the 50,000-nuyen fee indicated to a value more in line with your own game's history, tone, and style.

This second Johnson can answer a few questions relating to the background of this adventure. The gamemaster must field those questions on the fly, keeping in mind that the Johnson's employer wants the player characters to believe they are indirectly being hired by Dassurn Security and Investments to return the boy to his father in Seattle. Though the Johnson does not say anything like that directly, she allows the player characters to infer it. If they ask her pointblank whether Dassurn is hiring them or name another corporation or person, she refuses to answer.

The Johnson cannot give them information about any of the adventure's locations in Denver or anything the runners might be able to use to plan their mission. They'll have to get all that information from their local Denver contact. When the runner at the second meet agrees to take the mission, the Johnson hands him or her another datachip that contains a picture of the team's Denver contact—Jack Drew—and a Front Range Free Zone electronic-mail address at which to contact him. Once the runners arrive in Denver, they are to call Drew and wait for him to pick them up. Drew arranges everything else they need in the city, except the forged IDs they will need to get in and around Denver.

The Johnson can provide each runner with a Rating 9 forged ID and equally high-rated travel passes for the UCAS, Pueblo, and Sioux Sectors, with appropriate cover to handle their cyberware and such. She also tells them that the IDs are inherently unstable; their false background degrades quickly. She believes the IDs are good for more than two weeks, but cannot be sure. How long they last depends on the self-checking abilities of certain financial and informational databases, all of which are out of her patron's control. Note also that these fake ID/travel passes contain only passcode, fingerprint, and voiceprint verification schemes, so they cannot stand up to systems that also use cellular cross-referencing (such as those of Rating 6 or above). For more on fake IDs, credsticks, and/or travel passes, see pp. 49–52 of the **Rules** section, **Denver GM,** or similar material on pp. 81–83 and pp. 103–104 of the **Neo-Anarchists' Guide to Real Life**.

In game terms, the rating of the ID and travel passes degrades by 1 point for every two days after the first day the IDs and passes are activated. The rating drops to 8 in two days, 7 in four days, and so on. Obviously, the runners need to plan and execute the extraction of Shawn Gaffney within two weeks, preferably with time to spare to cover the days spent "baby-sitting" him in Denver.

Within the forty-eight hours after the second meet, each runner must provide the Johnson with a passcode, fingerprint, and voiceprint for use in the fake ID/travel passes the Johnson is arranging for them. After forty-eight hours, the passes show up; twenty-four hours after that, travel arrangements are made. The exact nature of the travel arrangements is up to the gamemaster, so that he or she can account for odd background requirements (for chromed trolls and such) that make roundabout entry into the Front Range Free Zone necessary.

DEBUGGING

This encounter is a standard "talk to the Johnson" scene—what could go wrong? (Yeah, we know—anything.)

Before they leave for Denver, the runners can do some legwork (see **Legwork,** p. 41). If they choose to skip that step, go directly to **City of Shadows**, p. 11.

CITY OF SHADOWS

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Read the following to one or more of the player characters as they arrive in Denver:

From this high up, as the Rocky Mountains slip away under you, it's impossible to see Denver as it truly is—a divided city in an ongoing shadow-war with itself. From here, at least, it looks pretty much like the sprawl you're used to. But as the plane banks and descends over the kilometers of urban decay, you can clearly see the walls that separate nation-sector from nation-sector, neighbor from neighbor. The view flashes by; seconds later you feel the gentle bump as the aircraft greets solid ground. Welcome to the Mile-High City, chummer.

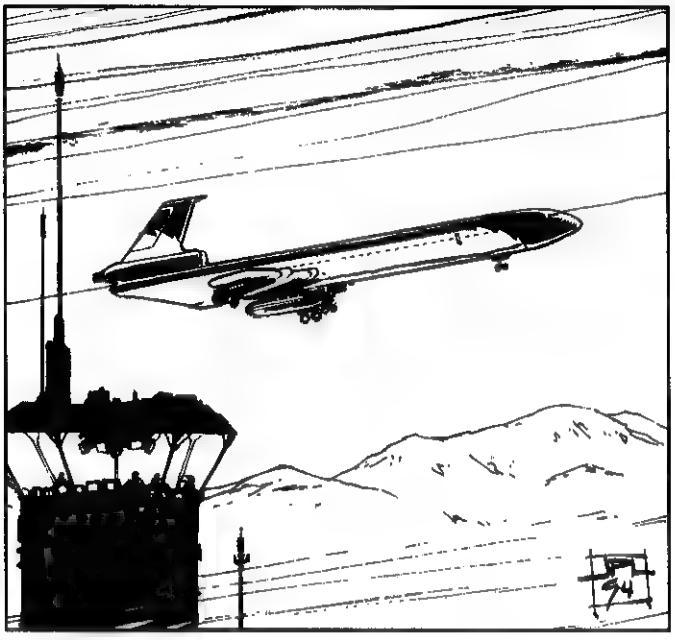
HOOKS

Undercurrents abound in Denver. Almost none of them have anything to do with the runners or their mission, but the runners should feel an almost palpable sense that something is *happening* everywhere. Biz runs deep in the City of Shadows, and the runners can feel it. A deal behind every door, as they say. The runners might also feel a little exhilaration—they're on the move, being active, taking care of business. They're in control and calling the shots. What an interesting seat to be in, *neh*?

BEHIND THE SCENES

In this encounter, the players need the information in **Denver** and the two color maps included in the boxed set: one of the entire Front Range Free Zone, the other of downtown Denver, specifically the UCAS and Sioux non-contiguous sectors. Work with each player to find the best way to get that character into the UCAS sector of Denver. For relevant information, see pp. 12–15 and p. 146 of **Denver,** as well as pp. 42–52 of the **Denver Gamemaster Book**. Some characters will find entry into Denver as easy as a walk in the front door via a UCAS airport. For others, particularly chromed pieces of one-time flesh now called street samurai, getting in might require more imaginative means.

The runners may all come in together or drift into Denver one by one. Regardless of which alternative they choose, at some point someone needs to call Jack Drew. The runners have orders to contact Drew by leaving an electronic message, along with the number of a public or private telecom at which they can be reached. Drew will get back to them immediately; when he does, they're to give him the passcode, "Hey chummer, I'm finally here! Can you pick me up?"



PAGING MR. DREW

Leaving a message in Jack Drew's e-mail box automatically forwards the message to his pocket secretary. He's been expecting the call (or calls) and responds within 2D6 x 10 seconds. (It's all headware, so he only needs time to get somewhere he can talk privately.)

Once Drew gets the call, his system translates the verbal passcode into digital data and compares it against the voiceprint information the runner in question gave the Johnson in **A Simple Hire.** Once the system confirms the caller's identity, Drew tells the runners to remain where they are and that he'll be there in 3D6 x 5 minutes. The gamemaster should roll the same 3 dice again to determine how long it actually takes him to get to the runners. If the dice roll result is lower (meaning Drew got there faster), traffic was light and the vehicle checkpoints wide open. If he's late, then he ran into gridlock. Welcome to Denver, chummer.

While the runners wait for Drew, feel free to expose them to as much local ambiance as seems fitting, depending on where the runners are and what the time of day. Don't subject the runners to anything particularly dangerous or important, just enough to give them a feel for the place. Someone doing a little biz nearby might serve well, as might local sector law enforcement dropping in on a native for a "chat." Whatever happens, make it something the runners either cannot or will not get involved in.

When Drew appears, he is driving a Leyland-Rover Transport medium van. He also has access to a Saab Dynamit 776Ti, but he only rolls that out when there's a need for speed (and he doesn't have to cart trolls around). For convenience, statistics for both vehicles appear along with Drew's statistics on p. 54 of **Cast of Shadows.**

Drew has arranged for a safe house in the Sioux Sector of Denver. He believes that most of the action will take place there, because both the Brandis Development and the Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services facility are located in that sector. He has picked a site in the commercial district of a less-than-stellar neighborhood. Years ago, the building housed a small printing company, but it has long since closed.

SIOUX SAFE HOUSE

The building Drew chose is larger than necessary, but he did not know how large a team he would have to support. The local gang, a mix of humans and metahumans (but none with greater-than-average ability) is on Drew's payroll and its members act as his lookouts when they're not blasted out of their minds on some illegal substance. Later on in the adventure, if trouble comes looking for the player characters at the safe house, the gamemaster should roll 3D6 against a Target Number 8. On a result of 1 success, the gang tips off the safe house that someone is coming, but they don't know who. Two or more successes means the gang can make a reasonable guess (at the gamemaster's discretion) about who is about to come knocking. In both cases, the gang gives the folks at the safe house a 3D6 x 30-second advance warning.

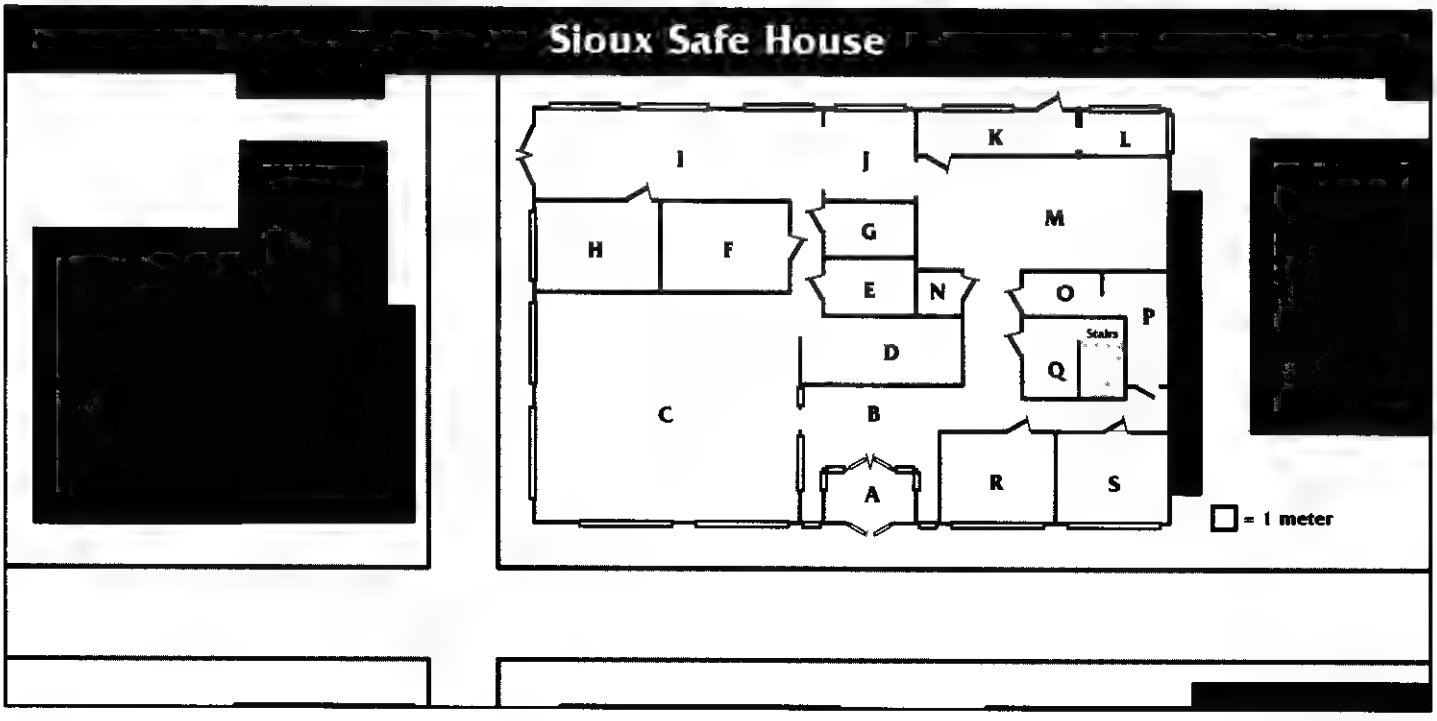
Drew can get the runners any supplies they might reasonably want for the safehouse. His job is to take care of mundane tasks and make sure the runners focus on their task. He has an operating budget of 15,000 nuyen but has been told he can keep half of all unspent funds, and so he tries to outfit the runners as cheaply as possible. He knows about the runners' mission, but does not find it all that interesting.

Safe House Map Key

The exterior wall of the safe house is made of about a quarter-meter of building material (Barrier Rating 12). All the exterior windows are made of older polyglass (Barrier Rating 3) and backed with sheets of hard wood (Barrier Rating 4; glass and wood together give a Barrier Rating of 7) that can be moved aside to allow someone to look or shoot out. The exterior doors at the front and rear of the building, though heavy, are not security doors and have a Barrier Rating of 6. The metal loading dock doors have a Barrier Rating of 8. All the doors have old-fashioned key-tumbler locks (Barrier Rating 14). Interior walls have a Barrier Rating of 6 and interior doors have a Barrier Rating of 4. The only interior doors with key-tumbler locks are rooms F, G, R, and S on the map. Rooms E and N, being bathrooms, have dead-bolt locks (Barrier Rating 14) that can only be operated from the inside. If a character possesses an appropriate skill for picking archaic locks (probably a Special Skill), the effective rating of the key-tumbler locks drops to 4. All the rooms are lit by overhead fluorescent lights.

Entranceway (A): This area is a simple foyer. The second set of doors has a Barrier Rating of 6 and can be locked with an interior dead-bolt (Barrier Rating 14). The glass in the inner and outer doors is standard glass (Barrier Rating 2), but the outer windows are backed with pieces of sheet metal (Barrier Rating 6).

Lobby (B): The lobby area is open, clear of debris and obstructions. The small polyglass windows that look out onto the street are backed by sheet metal. The windows between this room and Room C are cheap plastic (Barrier Rating 1).



Open Room (C): This room contains random bits of old furniture (chairs, sofas, tables). There's enough room in it to stash gear, bedrolls, toys, and so on. A single telecom jack marks the center of this room.

Kitchen (D): This room has been set up as an ad-hoc kitchen suitable for preparing frozen foods and other "flash" meals. It contains a microwave, an electric grill, a couple of storage cabinets and crates, and a refrigerator that makes an ugly grinding sound when it cycles on. An aged poster of simsense star Euphoria hangs on the far wall. Storage cabinets contain spare supplies such as paper towels, toilet paper, plastic plates, and utensils.

Bathroom (E): This bathroom has a dead-bolt lock and can accommodate more than one person at a time. It contains three toilet stalls, a pair of urinals, a wash basin, and a medicine cabinet containing the equivalent of a medkit.

Offices (F and G): These onetime offices now contain the pieces of odd furniture once used in them. Room F is all but abandoned; room G is equipped with a Matrix-capable telecom jack and a conduit that leads to the roof. Satellite link-up cables and similar tech can be passed through this conduit. The telecom hookup is illegal and has been set up in such a way that it adds +2 to any attempts to use Trace IC against a decker jacking in to the Matrix through the line.

Storage (H): This unlocked storeroom is usually reserved for boxes, supplies, and such. The runners can put anything they like in it.

Loading Dock (I): This simple loading dock can accommodate large vans and small trucks. Random bits of debris are scattered around; an exhaust fan lets vehicles idle in the dock without concern for asphixiation.

Storage Room (J-L): Once used to store boxes and supplies, these rooms are empty.

Workroom (M): Once a workroom, this bug-infested room contains several wooden tables and counters. The floor's main fuse-box is in this room, along with a single telecom jack in the lower righthand corner.

Bathroom (N): A single-user bathroom similar in all other respects to Room E.

Workrooms/Offices (O-Q): These empty rooms can easily be used for sleeping. Room Q has a large, wide stairway that descends to the empty basement, which is the same size as the entire building aboveground.

Offices (R and S): These rooms are both defunct offices. Each has a telecom jack in the exterior wall.

DEBUGGING

Once again, little can go wrong in this straightforward encounter. From here, the runners may wish to perform **Legwork,** p. 41; check out the **Shining Bright School,** p. 14; go to the **Brandis Development,** p. 19; check out **Corp X,** p. 33; or even take a gander at Shawn's therapist in **Other Opportunities,** p. 27.

SHINING BRIGHT SCHOOL

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

You cruise past the school as casually as you can. A two-and-a-half-meter high, ivy-covered stone wall surrounds it, with a pair of heavy wrought-iron gates up front. Both the fence and gate clash with the sedate, southwestern-style, single-story school building. Looks pretty small, but considering its exclusive clientele, size probably doesn't matter. You can barely make out activity through the front windows of the building; beyond that and the few expensive cars parked in what seems to be the visitor parking area, you see little of interest.

HOOKS

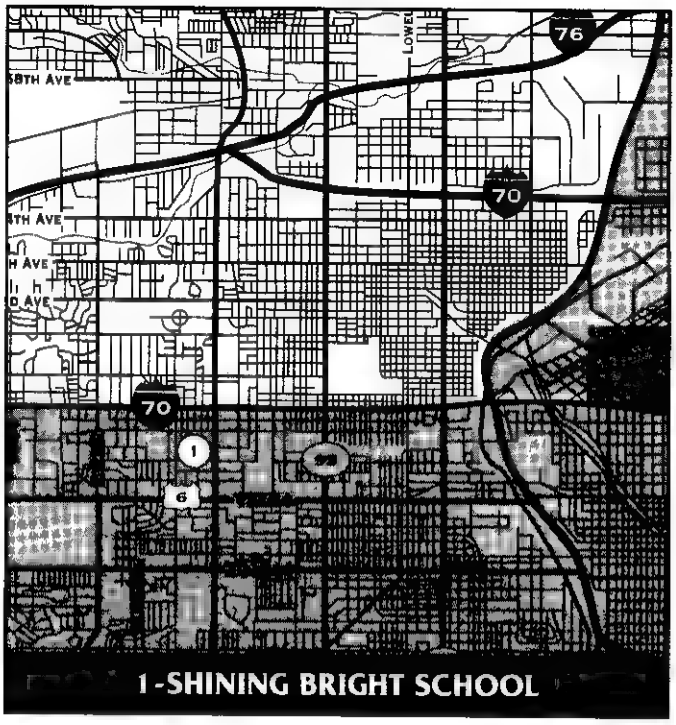
If the runners get a look inside the school, they may notice that for all its "advanced modern education theory" and ergonomic, multimedia design, the school has no energy. Though a structural and technological marvel, this place has no soul. It looks remote, cold, and uninspiring. Everything is arranged by computer expert systems—scheduling, class structure, subjects, activities, the whole ball of wax. The teachers are actually administrators who point the students toward the machines to use and the buttons to push. The students receive none of the magic of learning. (The gamemaster may also provide the runners with this information through legwork.)

If the runners get a look at Shawn Gaffney's school records, they may notice and connect two subtle clues to his personality. Shawn Gaffney's records say he shows promise in both music and computers, but won't apply himself. Second, all music studied in the Aesthetic Studies courses is classical; the school seems to have no modern music recordings or technological music-making equipment. If Shawn can connect music and technology and discover modern music, he will have found his hidden talents.

BEHIND THE SCENES

As noted, Shawn Gaffney attends the Shining Bright School each weekday, located near 10th Avenue and Depew Street in the Pueblo Corporate Council Sector of the Front Range Free Zone. The ride from his mother's condo in the Brandis Development (see p. 21) takes 2D6 + 20 minutes under most circumstances. Road construction or social upheaval can make the trip up to twice that long.

One of the family's bodyguards—usually Peter Tomita—drives Shawn to and from school in the family's black Eurocar



1-SHINING BRIGHT SCHOOL

Westwind 2000. They depart the Brandis Development at about 7:30 A.M., arriving at the school just before 8:00 A.M. (on a good day). Tomita drops Shawn off in front of the school, exiting the vehicle with the boy and watching to make sure he enters the building and is under the control of the school's security people. Tomita then leaves the school and returns to the condo, or performs various errands as desired by his employer.

Tomita returns to the Shining Bright School just before 3:30 P.M. to pick up the boy. They usually drive straight back to the condo, but occasionally make a side trip for ice cream or a quick stop at a nearby shopping mall. (The gamemaster decides whether or not Tomita and the boy take any of these excursions between the beginning of the runners' surveillance and their actual attempt to grab the boy. Adding such side trips into Shawn's schedule makes planning Shawn's extraction harder, which may or may not be desirable, depending on the nature and abilities of the shadowrunning team involved.)

The school, operating on the modern educational theory of "continual challenge," has no set class schedule or room assignments. The runners, therefore, cannot know where Shawn Gaffney will be inside the school building at any given time during the day unless someone has decked into the school's computer system that morning to obtain the day's schedule. The only exception is Shawn's half-hour lunch break, which always

occurs sometime between 12:15 and 1:15 P.M. For half of that hour, the boy can always be found in the lunch room.

Daily classes cover a variety of subjects. The children go to classes that the school's instructors (and the educational expert system) decide each child needs the most, depending on his or her interests, aptitudes, needs, and weaknesses. Classes last either an hour or an hour and a half; the length of any single class may vary from day to day. Students with time on their hands usually spend it in the Big Room/study hall, waiting for the beginning of their next class.

Each classroom is assigned a subject and has an ample supply of multimedia equipment geared to the presentation and learning of that particular subject. The rooms are laid out in an ergonomic scheme determined by experts to be "less hierarchical," "less threatening," and more conducive to "self-motivated learning." Teaching each class is a single instructor and an educational assistant. All personnel with the exception of the security guards at the Shining Bright School are average humans or elves (except for two ork janitors); if the gamemaster needs statistics for any of these NPCs, use the game statistics provided for Average People on p. 56, **Cast of Shadows.**

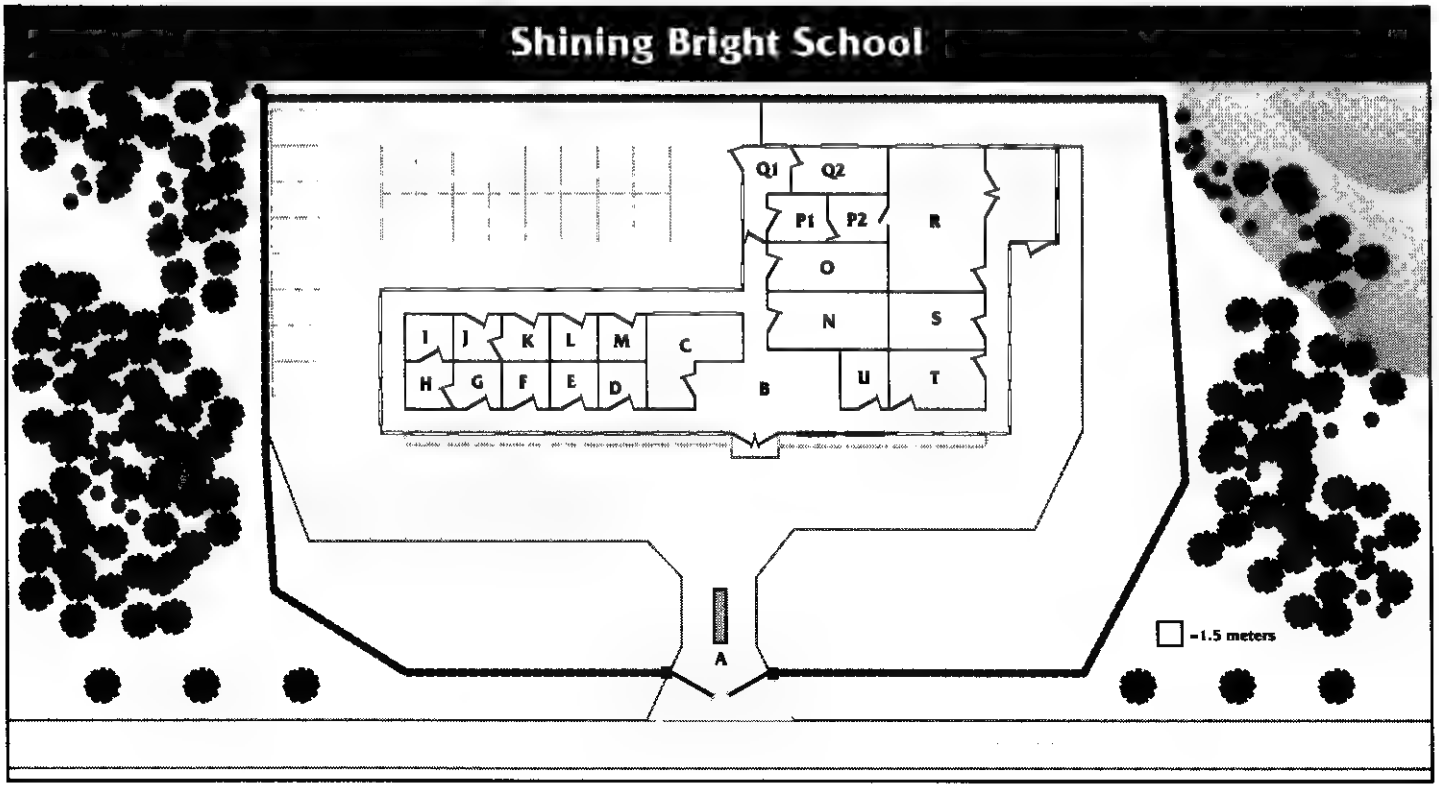
Thirty-eight students attend the school, and the average class size is seven. Class groupings change constantly to ensure that all students intermix. The groupings are assigned by ability, meaning that a gifted younger student might often attend classes with older students. Usually, one class is going on at all times in each subject room, and a particular student may return more than once to the same room for classes in different, though related, areas of study.

SCHOOL BUILDING MAP KEY

Despite its traditional southwestern facade, Shining Bright School is a modern facility with state-of-the-art environmental systems, computers, and security systems. The school is surrounded by a 2.5-meter high wall of steel-reinforced bricks with a Barrier Rating of 24. Spaced every ten feet on top of the wall are round ornaments that are actually sophisticated motion and thermographic sensors. These sensors detect anything that passes between them or over them up to a height of 5 meters. Faculty and staff parking is located to the left side and rear of the building; the spaces directly in front are reserved for visitors and guests.

Gate (A)

The wrought-iron front gate is actually reinforced steel alloy anchored into a stone and steel foundation, for a combined effective Barrier Rating of 20 (for ramming attempts). The bars are spaced far enough apart for bullets and similar flying objects to pass through, though a person cannot. Pressure pads and motion sensors built into the gravel driveway and gate columns detect vehicles and pedestrians. Though the gates are normally kept open at the beginning and end of the school day, they are controlled by electronic command from the school's Security Center. Runners scanning the area carefully will note the presence of a hidden emergency switch inside the gate on the innermost side of the left column. To notice the camouflaged switch requires a character to achieve at least 1 success on a Perception (10) Test; 2 successes means that the character knows the function of the switch. Just beyond the gate lies a flower garden that blooms year-round.



Lobby (B)

The school's lobby is open and spacious, accented by terra-cotta tiles and traditional southwestern art and sculpture. Bright light streams in through the clear glass roof. Clearly visible on the left side are windows looking into the Aesthetic Studies room, where students learn about and practice various fine arts.

Aesthetic Studies Room (C)

This room is designed and outfitted to assist students in learning about and attempting a wide variety of fine arts, such as painting, drawing, sculpting, and playing various classical instruments. Sophisticated multimedia systems assist the student interested in art or music history, though all art students must use traditional media (paint, clay, and so on).

Student Liaison Office (D)

This office belongs to Dotti Findler, the student liaison. Students take their problems, complaints, and other concerns to her. Ms. Findler doubles as the school nurse and is trained to use the medical/diagnostic expert system. Additionally, the school has the equivalent of a Platinum DocWagon™ contract for emergency services. At least two other people are always working in Ms. Findler's office.

Faculty Office and Lounge (E–F)

Room E contains several desks and computer terminals at which the faculty may work, though they are usually encouraged to take care of administrative tasks at the work spaces assigned to them in the appropriate subject rooms. Room F is the lounge, and contains tables, chairs, sofas, soycaf/drink machines, and a trideo system.

Administrative Offices (G–I)

Room G holds the school's three low-level administrators, Room H holds the two mid-level administrators, and Room I is the office of Headmaster Walter Denhurst. Denhurst has access to all the building's security monitors, which are found in all rooms except the offices and lounges (D–I) and the bathrooms (L and M), and also cover all of the exterior grounds (see **Shining Bright Security**, p. 17).

Security Control (J)

Employees in this room monitor all the school's sensors and cameras and can electronically open or lock all the exterior doors. For more information, see **Shining Bright Security,** p. 17. Three security guards are always on duty here during the day, one at night. For the guards' game statistics, use the Corporate Security Guard contact on p. 205, **SRII**.

Central Computer (K)

This room houses the school's primary and back-up computers, as well as the primary and archival databases. One person is always on duty during the day; the school also has a technical specialist who maintains the various pieces of technology. For more information, see **The School Matrix,** beginning on p. 17.

Bathrooms (L and M)

Room L is the ladies' room; Room M is the men's room. Both are ultra-modern in design and function.

Computer Sciences Room (N)

This subject room abounds with computers and electronics, though its focus is primarily on use rather than theory. Several desktop computers in the room are all networked to each other, though not to the school's computer system. The computer on the instructor's desk is tied into the school's system, as well as networked to the student's machines. It cannot, however, be used as a bridge between the two networks.

Social Sciences Room (O)

In this subject room, such intellectual studies as history, economics, sociology, anthropology, literature, and the like take place. The room contains a sophisticated multimedia system designed to assist education in all those areas.

Storage and Kitchen (P1 and P2)

Food and food service-related items are stored in Room P1; meals are prepared in Room P2. Three people make up the kitchen staff.

Maintenance and Storage (Q1 and Q2)

Items and equipment needed to service and maintain the school premises, including spare parts, are stored in Rooms Q1 and Q2. Room Q2 also serves as the "office" for the two ork janitors.

Big Room (R)

Known colloquially as the "Big Room" by students and staff alike, this room serves as the lunch room and can be reconfigured as a study hall or a large meeting or festival room as needed.

Bio Sciences Room (S)

Biology, botany, and zoology are taught in this room. Like the other subject rooms, it contains a sophisticated multimedia system geared toward those subject areas. It also holds an extensive array of lab equipment.

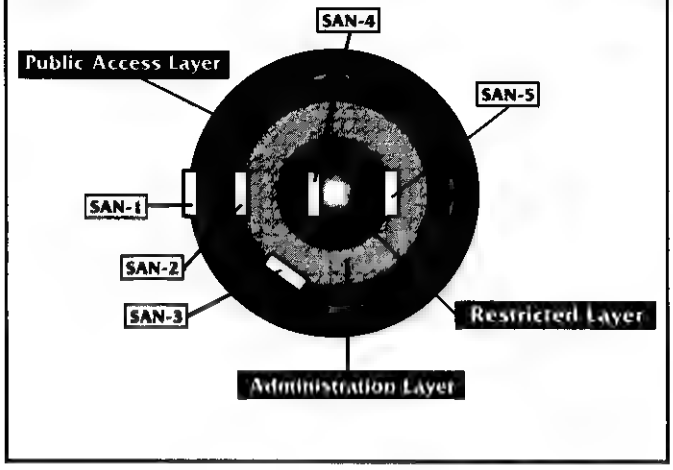
Physical Sciences Room (T)

Physics, chemistry, geology, and other related sciences are taught in this room, which contains an extensive array of lab equipment.

Coat Check/Storage (U)

Students, faculty, and staff store clothing and belongings here. Faculty and staff have unrestricted access to the room, but students must get assistance from Ms. Findler. Ms. Findler is always on duty near the coat check at the start and end of the school day.

SHINING BRIGHT MATRIX



THE SCHOOL MATRIX

The school's simple computer system is set up primarily to repel intruders who attempt to gain access through the SAN, rather than from inside. Shining Bright School has no security decker on staff, though administrators or security personnel can call one in from Falconer Protective Services (the school's security company). Such a decker usually arrives in 2D6 Combat Turns; for more information, see **Shining Bright Security,** below.

The school computer system has three layers: Public Access, Administration, and Restricted. For more information on how to run the Matrix/computer systems depicted in this adventure, see **Layered Matrix System,** p. 62.

Public Access Layer

External Path (NA/PUE 429-3329): SAN-1 (Green-3, Access 2). Unrestricted access to all users.

Contents/Description: The Public Access layer is designed for open access to school scheduling, electronic mail, and promotional information. It has a simple SPU and a datastore that contains the relevant information and multimedia files. The layer is slightly sculpted to superficially resemble the school itself. The SAN resembles the school building, and the remainder of the system architechture represents the school's lobby, which contains a variety of kiosks that allow access to various public functions. This layer contains no information of real value in this adventure.

Security/Defenses: None.

Administration Layer

External Path: None.

Internal Paths: SAN-2 from Public Access layer via electronic mail (Orange-4, Access 6). SAN-3 from Public Access layer via public records databases (Orange-4, Barrier 5).

Contents/Description: The Administration layer uses standard Universal Matrix Specifications architecture: generic, polygonal shapes and forms. Each department has a subprocessor, as does general administration and building maintenance.

Departmental SPUs: Orange-3, Access 3. Linked to various datastores and I/O ports.

Administration SPU: Orange-4, Access 5, Killer 4. Linked to various datastores and I/O ports. The runners can find daily class schedules in the datastores associated with this SPU.

Building Maintenance SPU: Orange-3, Access 3. Linked to various datastores, I/O ports, and a slave module governing the water sprinkler/fire alarm system.

Security/Defenses: None beyond those present in individual SPUs.

Restricted Layer

External Path: SAN-4 (Red-5, Access 6, Blaster 6). Hardwired path from Falconer Protective Services.

Internal Paths: SAN-5 from Administration layer via Administration SPU (Red-4, Access 6, Killer 4).

Contents/Description: The Restricted layer uses standard Universal Matrix Specifications architecture, generic, polygonal shapes and forms. Administration and bookkeeping, as well as the school's security system each have their own SPUs.

Administration SPU: Red-3, Access 4, Killer 3. Linked to various datastores containing school and student records, as well as accounting and inventory records.

Security SPU: Red-3, Access 5, Killer 4. Linked to a records datastore, as well as various I/O ports and slave modules controlling the security systems (motion detectors, cameras, and so on).

Security/Defenses: Falconer corporate deckers enter the system through the hardwired path connecting to this layer. This layer has no other security or defenses beyond those described for individual SPUs.

SHINING BRIGHT SECURITY

Shining Bright School subcontracts site and personal security to a private security firm, Falconer Protective Services (FPS). FPS handles all aspects of the school's security, including magical and matrix security. Though the firm supervises and maintains security systems in the school's computers, it has no active decker on-site. A security decker is on call, however, and can reach the school's system in 2D6 Combat Turns. To reflect the slight chance that the decker is unavailable when called, the gamemaster should roll 2D6. On a result of 2 or 3, the decker will not arrive for 2D6 x 10 Combat Turns. For this decker's statistics, use the Corporate Decker profile in **Cast Of Shadows,** p. 56, but give him/her a Threat/Professional Rating of 4/3.

The motion/thermo sensors on the wall described in **School Building Map Key** (p. 15) remain active at all times, but the

vibration/motion system buried throughout the grounds is only activated at night. During school hours, three guards are on duty at all times. Two of them are standard Corporate Security Guards (see p. 205, **SRII**), equipped with Ares Predator pistols, 20 rounds of ammo, and armored jackets (5/3). They have Threat/Professional Ratings of 3/3. The third guard is a combat mage. For the mage's statistics, use the Combat Mage archetype on p. 50, **SRII.** Give him a Threat/Professional Rating of 4/3 and two Force 4 elementals as well. The mage also has a Force 2 watcher spirit on call that he can use to distract someone, fight, or run for help.

All the security guards have emergency bracelets that alert Falconer headquarters if they need help. If the bracelets go off, two street samurai and one magician turn up in 2D6 x 2 minutes and 1D6 Combat Turns respectively. For these NPCs' statistics, use the Street Samurai and Former Wage Mage archetypes (p. 62 and 56 of **SRII**, respectively); give all three Threat/Professional Ratings of 4/3 and give the magician two Force 5 elementals. The magician and her pair of elementals arrive on the scene astrally; the samurai transport her body in their security vehicle, a common Ford Americar (p. 264, **SRII**).

Every member of the faculty and staff also has an alert bracelet which notifies on-site security of any problems. In such instances, the three on-duty guards arrive in 1D6 Combat Turns. The gamemaster should roll separately for each guard. A pair of H&K 227 SMGs with laser sights and 60 rounds of regular ammunition are under lock and key in the security office.

At night, the school keeps a regular corporate security guard on duty, but not the combat mage. The back-up samurai arrive in 2D6 x 4 minutes, and the back-up magician arrives astrally in 2D6 Combat Turns.

CRISIS RESPONSE

If the runners attempt to grab Shawn Gaffney at or near the Shining Bright School, security personnel react in one of the following ways. If the attempt occurs on school grounds, the on-site guards immediately assist Peter Tomita and/or the boy. They also request backup and alert Pueblo Security Enterprises (PSE), the local law enforcement. (For more information on PSE, see pp. 125–26, **Denver.**) PSE forces respond in the time indicated on pp. 53–54 of the **Denver Gamemaster Book**. The gamemaster should determine the forces sent by PSE and their actions based on the relative strength of the player characters, as well as their activities. For more information, see **The Search Is On,** p. 31.

If the runners get off school grounds and attempt to escape with Shawn, the security force pursues as best it can. The combat mage attempts to astrally follow the escape vehicle, while the remaining two guards pursue the runners in a Ford Americar parked out back. They also forward any and all information they have on to the PSE, who try to intercept the runners and *immediately* contact the boy's mother. Anna Coleridge-Gaffney alerts Fuchs-Auberlien's security firm, Knight Errant (KE). (See **The Search Is On,** p. 32, for more information.)

If the kidnapping attempt occurs near but not on school grounds, the school's security team makes an initial response, but does not pursue the team because they have no legal jurisdiction outside school grounds. They forward any and all information about the runners to the PSE and contact the boy's mother, as described above.

DEALING WITH SHAWN

If the runners grab Shawn at or near the school, they must immediately deal with his reactions to those and following events. For relevant information, see p. 35 of the encounter **Laying Low.**

DEBUGGING

Plenty can get fouled up here if the runners are spectacularly unprepared or unlucky. Be prepared for almost anything and make sure the grab isn't too easy. If necessary, make Shining Bright's security fiercer than expected or have PSE or even Knight Errant come down on the runners hard and fast. The runners need to act smart and sharp to stay ahead of the law.

If the runners choose not to grab Shawn at or near the school, they may try **Brandis Development,** p. 19, or **Other Opportunities,** p. 26. If the runners are only interested in looking over the school at this point, they may go to **Legwork,** p. 41.

BRANDIS DEVELOPMENT

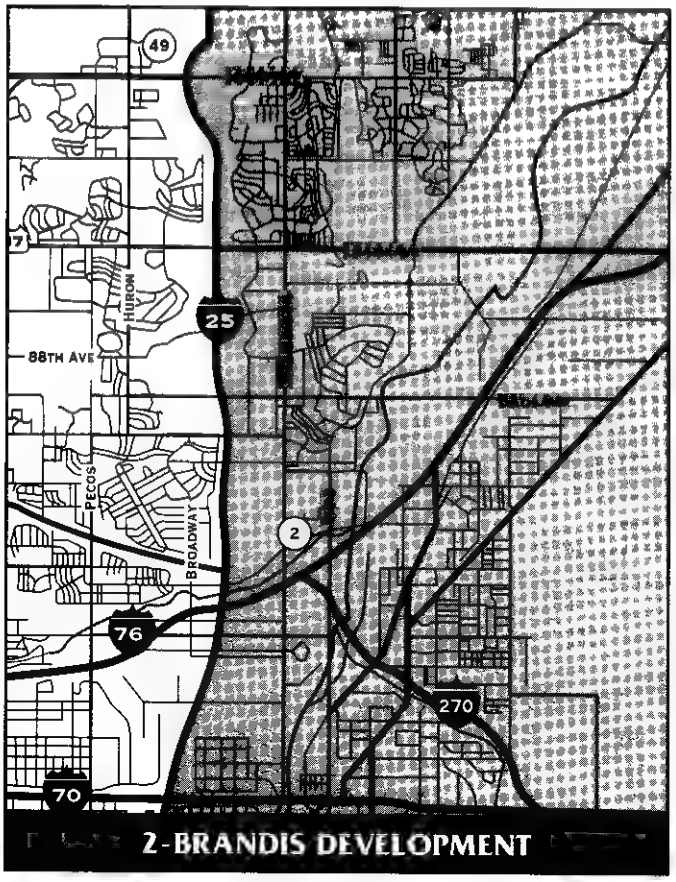
TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

From the looks of this place, you could be in Montana or some other stretch of horse country. The three white towers of Brandis Development are clearly visible (in fact, you could see them for kilometers before you got to the actual location), but the gentle hills around them are covered with lush grass and thriving trees and brush. A double-rail wooden fence surrounds the development's perimeter, with a gate in front and a gate in back. If you didn't know better, you'd swear you were looking at a country club.

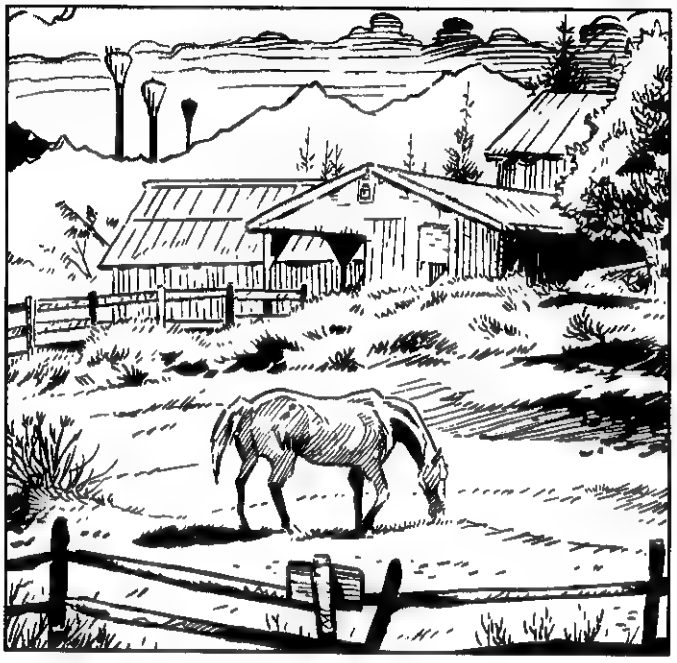
HOOKS

Money. Money. Money.

Location is everything, and these condos command a high price because of the land they occupy. If the runners are lucky, they might someday know someone who could afford a place like this.



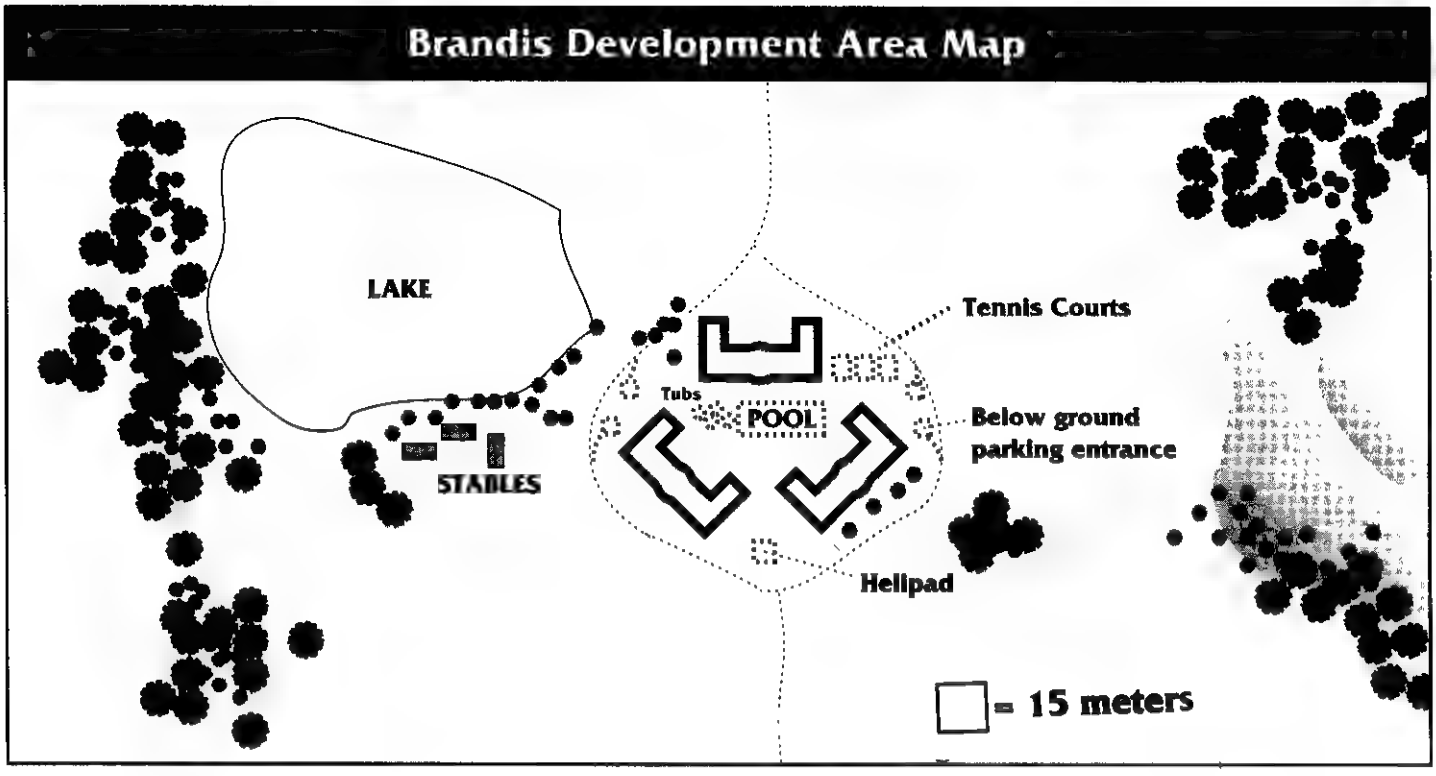
2-BRANDIS DEVELOPMENT



BEHIND THE SCENES

Anna Coleridge-Gaffney and her son Shawn live in a residential corporate enclave known as the Brandis Development. Part apartment complex, part country club, the development's three 30-story, primary buildings tower over the landscape near East 71st Street and Lafayette Street of the Sioux Council Sector. The three buildings are virtually identical except for their first floors, and so this adventure only includes one set of maps for these buildings. If the player characters enter buildings other than the main building where Anna and Shawn live, use the maps supplied and simply keep in mind the following differences in the respective buildings' ground-floor levels. The southwest building contains laundry rooms, building maintenance offices, the main security office, and other offices devoted to the development's upkeep and utilities. The southeast building contains a restaurant, kitchen, and assorted support facilities.

Note also that the residential floor plan representing the condo and floor on which Anna and her son live is generic. Though some variation exists from living space to living space, the actual floor plan remains the same until one reaches the top five floors of each building. These floors contain single-unit condos instead of the dual units represented by the generic floor plan. Make any necessary adjustments to the surroundings throughout this encounter.



Brandis Development takes up quite a bit of land. Brandis' builders created the manmade lake thirteen years ago when the development first went up. During the warm season, the lake is artificially stocked with game fish specially adapted to survive in the chemically treated water. The fish are not edible. Surrounding the entire property is a four-meter-high, steel-reinforced, wooden rail fence with an effective Barrier Rating of 20. The front and rear gates are usually unmanned, but constantly monitored. Each has a motorized fence-barricade with a Barrier Rating of 18, normally kept closed. Site security personnel use a closed-circuit video system to acknowledge and approve those wishing to enter the development.

The stables operate year-round. They contain six horses owned by the development corporation and four others owned by various residents. Two staff members are with the horses at all times; these staffers share a small room above the stable. Three other staffers vary shifts throughout the week and are present at various times to assist the permanent staffers, the residents, and their guests. During the winter months, two of the development-owned horses are sent south for the winter and replaced by two others who pull a sleigh around the property.

A maintenance staff of two supervises the four tennis courts; these workers live off-site and are only on the development's grounds during the day. In addition to those two, male and female professional instructors work with residents and guests during normal business hours or after hours by appointment. The instructors also live off-site. The courts are fully lit for night tennis, and air-pressure domes cover them during the winter.

Three maintenance workers take care of the oversized swimming pool. Seven lifeguards on rotating shifts supervise the pool from 5 A.M. to 10 P.M. daily. None of these personnel live on-site. During the winter, an air pressure dome covers half the pool, and the water is heated to allow for open and protected winter swimming. Though the pool is only supervised for part of the day, residents and guests over the age of seventeen may swim outside of official pool hours.

The hot tubs and whirlpools near the pool are divided into two sets. One set is open to all residents and their guests, regardless of age. The other set is for adults only; adolescents and children under seventeen may not use that set. Both sets remain open to the air year-round, but a semi-transparent, heated "hallway" is erected between them and the bathhouse during the winter months. The bathhouse, hot tubs, and whirlpools are open 24 hours a day and are maintained by the same staff that oversees the main pool.

An underground parking garage lies below the buildings. The garage is staffed by three attendants between 5 A.M. and 9 P.M. daily. Two attendants oversee the facility during the remaining time. Residents and guests may park their own cars or have them valet-parked. A nearby lounge for chauffeurs comes complete with a trideo entertainment center. It takes the staff 1D6 + 1 minutes to locate and prepare a requested car. Anna Coleridge-Gaffney's Eurocar Westwind 2000, used by Peter Tomita, is kept here. For convenience, the Westwind's statistics appear along with Peter Tomita's in **Cast of Shadows**, p. 52. Ms. Coleridge-Gaffney commutes to and from work in a company-supplied Toyota Elite limo. See **General Family Schedule**, p. 25 of this encounter, for more information.

The development's helipad is just a slab of concrete. Brandis has no helicopter maintenance staff or fuel stores.

All Brandis development staff are Average People as described in **Cast of Shadows,** p. 56.

MAIN BUILDING

The main building, in which Anna Coleridge-Gaffney and Shawn Gaffney live, is the northernmost building of the three. Anna and Shawn live on the 21st floor in the east condo. The building's exterior walls have a Barrier Rating of 15. All exterior windows below the sixth floor have a Barrier Rating of 5; those above that floor have a Barrier Rating of 3. The lobby doors have a Barrier Rating of 8, while the automated locks have a Barrier Rating of 16. All interior walls have a Barrier Rating of 8 and all interior doors have a Barrier Rating of 6. Residences have Rating 6 maglocks and offices have Rating 4 maglocks on their interior doors unless otherwise noted, and all interior maglocks have a Barrier Rating of 8. All maglocks can be activated by a keycard or recognized voice-command; in the latter case, the system must be preprogrammed for the voice pattern in question.

This building and its two counterparts have spacious, marble-floored lobbies with a shallow pool and miniature waterfall surrounded by various pieces of exotic greenery in the center. The entire first-floor ceiling is six meters high, as opposed to the standard four meters on all the other floors. From 5 A.M. to 9 P.M., two staffers are always present in the lobby to help residents, greet guests and so on. During the later evening hours, only one staffer is present. The front doors are unlocked from 5 A.M. to 9 P.M. but must be electronically opened by the staffer at the desk or a security guard at all other times. A staffer on duty also arranges for valet parking of residents' and guests' vehicles.

GROUND FLOOR MAP

Exercise Room (A)

This mirror-lined exercise room is used primarily for aerobics and occasional dance classes. To determine if anyone is present here during the day (6 A.M. to 6 P.M.), roll 2D6. On a result of 6 or less, 2D6 people are exercising or dancing, led by one instructor. To determine if anyone is present from 6 P.M. to 10 P.M., make another 2D6 roll. A result of 4 or less indicates that 2D6 people are present. At all other times, the room is empty.

Maintenance Office (B1)

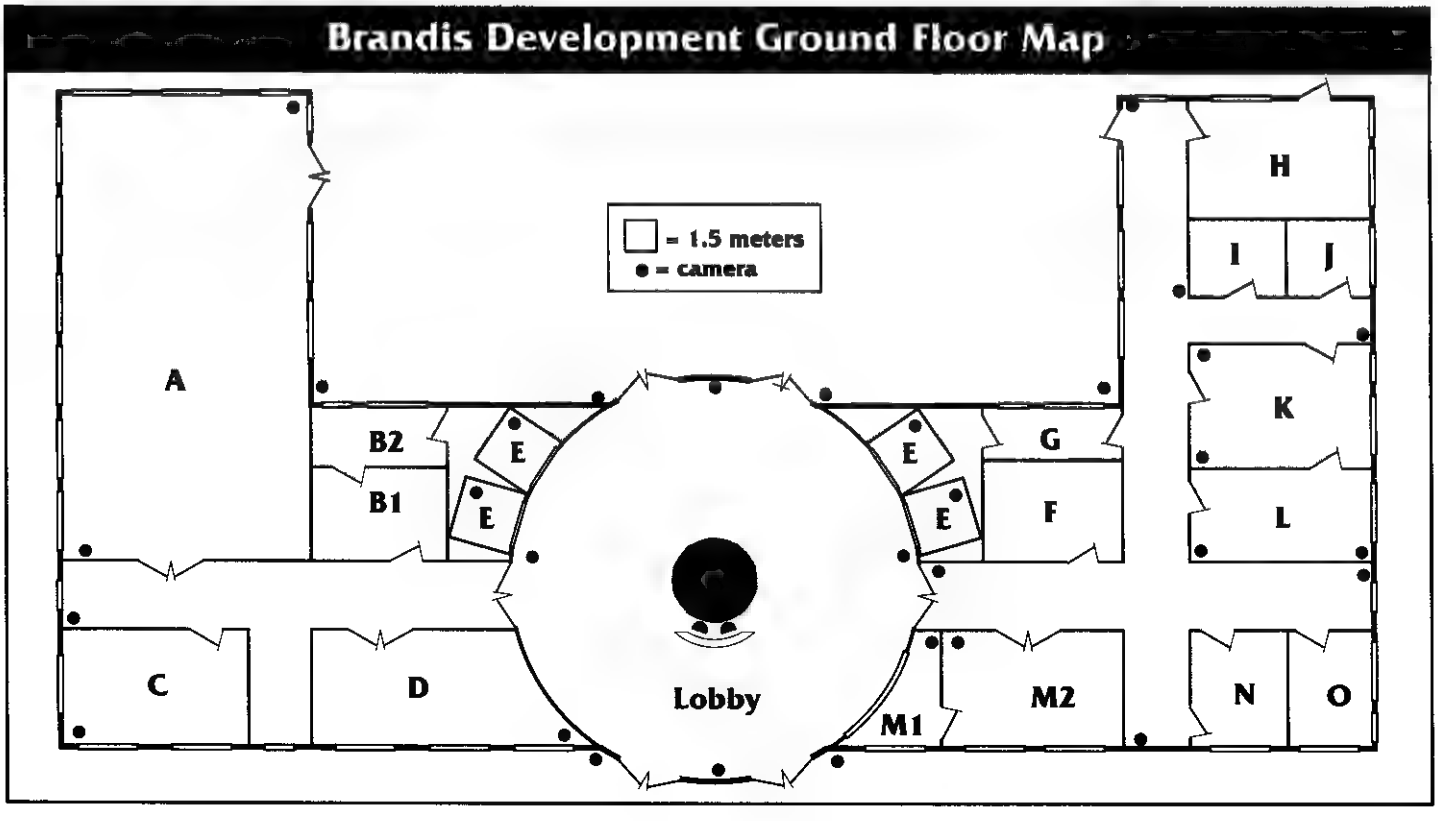
This public office space is used by the maintenance staff. Residents can drop by or call this office with comments or complaints. Two staffers are in this room 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily, including weekends.

Storage/Elevator Access (B2)

This room is used for general storage and also includes controls for the west elevator bank. The exterior windows facing into this room are made of frosted, translucent glass.

Weight Room (C)

This room contains numerous pieces of body-building and weightlifting equipment. To determine if anyone is present, roll 2D6. On a result of 4 or less during the day (6 A.M. to 6 P.M.), 1D6 people are working out. A result of 6 or less from 6 P.M. to 10 P.M. indicates 2D6 people are present.



Workout Room (D)

This room contains several pieces of mechanically enhanced exercise equipment, some of which appear quite frightening. To determine if anyone is present, roll 2D6. On a result of 4 or less during the day (6 A.M. to 6 P.M.), 1D6 people are working out. A result of 6 or less from 6 P.M. to 10 P.M. indicates 2D6 people are present.

Elevators (E)

The four lobby elevators work around the clock and can be controlled from the lobby desk or security offices in the southwest building. The elevator doors have Barrier Ratings of 6. The elevators' interior walls have Barrier Ratings of 4. If anything punches a hole larger than half a meter in either the walls or the doors, the elevator stops dead. Normal gunfire will not create such a hole and therefore will not stop the elevator, unless the bullets strike the elevator's control panel. The elevators can be controlled by a conventional number/floor keypad or by universal voice command (meaning anyone's voice will do). It takes five seconds to open or close the doors and five more to travel between floors.

Travel Office (F)

This office assists residents with travel in and out of the Front Range Free Zone. A single staffer is present on weekdays from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Elevator Access/Storage (G)

This room provides access to the east elevator bank and is used for storing small parts used to make minor repairs to various machines in the building.

Outside Storage (H)

Various pieces of equipment, mostly related to the pool, are stored here.

Restrooms (I, J)

Room I is the men's room; Room J, the ladies' room.

Recreation Rooms (K, L)

Rooms K and L are small recreational rooms containing various trideo and simsense single and multi-player games. Both are open to residents.

Main Building Security (M1, M2)

Though these two rooms are not the development's security control center, several vital systems of the main building's security network can be accessed through computers located here. Room M1 is a monitoring station with a clear window looking into the lobby. A building security guard mans the desk 24 hours a day (see **Site Security,** p. 24). A bank of monitors shows the lobby and the outside of the building from the vantage points of various security cameras.

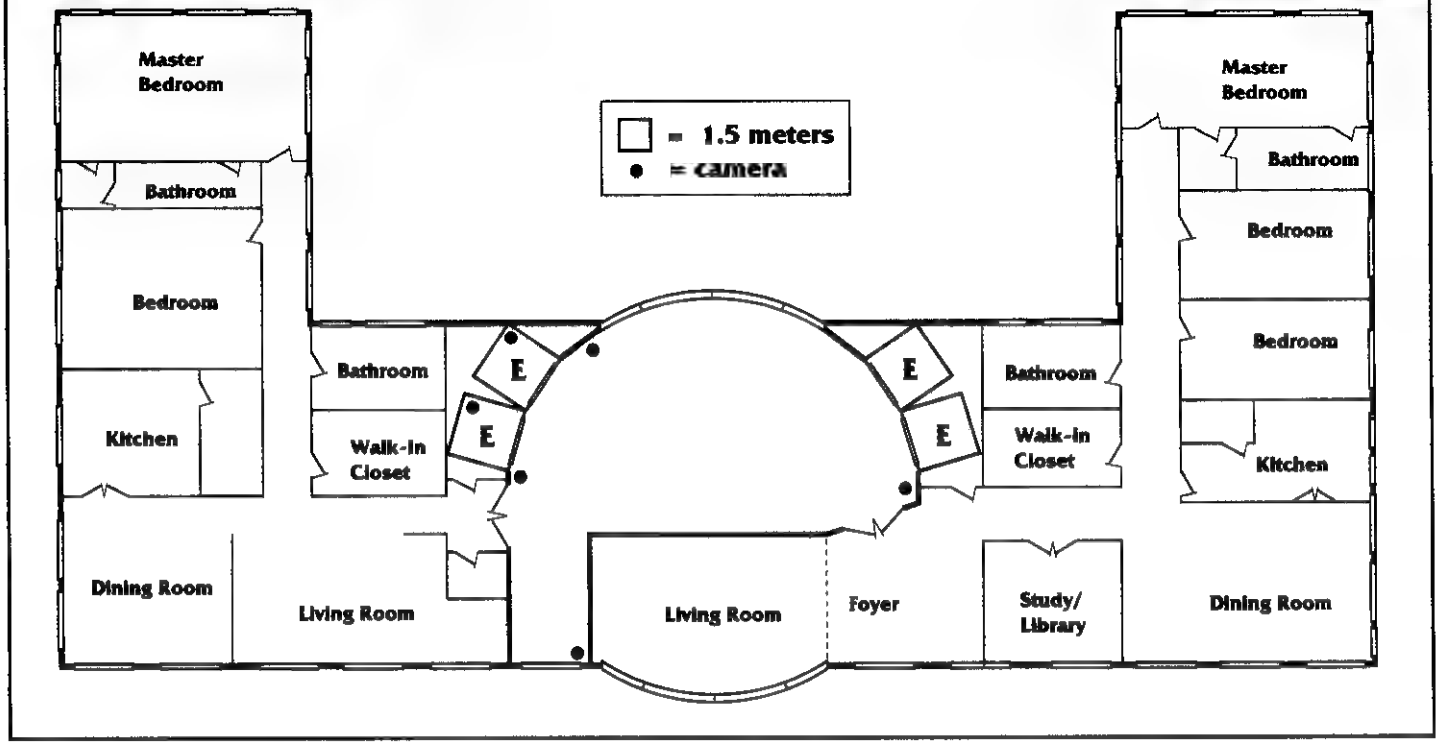
Room M2 is a conventional office that serves as the liaison point between residents and security personnel. During normal business hours, a public relations representative of Knight Errant Security works here along with a member of building security. No one is in this office during off hours.

The computers in the office tie into the building's primary security grid and are only lightly protected. Knight Errant knows that the computers should be in a more physically secure location, but property management has elected not to spend the money to make the office more secure. The office door has a Rating 6 maglock instead of the building-standard Rating 4 maglock.

Building Management (N, O)

One representative of the property's management company stays in each of these two offices during normal business hours. This office is the site of meetings between the management company and residents who prefer not to use the electronic mail system.

Brandis Development Residential Floor Map



RESIDENTIAL FLOORS/SHAWN'S CONDO MAP

Though the above map can be used for the residential floors of all three buildings, the following room descriptions apply only to the condo shared by Anna and Shawn.

Living Room/Foyer

The foyer and living room of Anna and Shawn's condo both sport aggressive tech-noir decor. The sparse living room has hardly any comfortable furniture because Anna prefers not to entertain at home; she uses the room primarily as a fashionable showpiece. A small coat closet opens off the foyer.

Study/Library

Anna works in this room when she is at home. Though also decorated in tech-noir style, the study is more cluttered and less chic because it actually sees use. Shawn is forbidden to enter this room, but often pokes around in it when he is home alone.

Dining Room

Dominated by a modern, single-support table of black glass, this room is the place where Anna and Shawn eat all their meals, whether formal or casual. The table is specially treated to resist scratching from the handmade "Tibetan" stoneware plates and utensils Anna fancies this week.

Bathroom

The bathroom has an octagonal, enclosed bath/shower and far too many mirrors.

Walk-in Closet

This walk-in storage closet is kept impeccably organized and coordinated. Anna has forbidden Shawn to keep any of his toys or clothes in it. Unknown to his mother, however, Shawn has created a secret base for his "Butt-Kicking Banzai Raiders™" toys in the far corner of this room. He keeps the evil overlord El Butcher™ here at all times.

Master Bedroom

Anna's bedroom is so pristine and gleaming that it's hard to believe anyone actually uses it. The maid knows that if this bedroom ever looks lived-in (unless Anna is actually there), another maid will be fixing up the room come tomorrow. The attached bathroom looks exactly like the other one in the apartment, and a climate-controlled, walk-in closet provides storage space for Anna's clothes.

Bedroom 1

This bedroom is used as a guest bedroom.

Bedroom 2

This bedroom belongs to Shawn. Despite his mother's (and the maid's) best efforts, it remains the bedroom of an eight year old. Toys lay scattered around, and various pieces of broken and half-working electronics cover the top of the dresser and a small set of shelves. Trid posters reflecting a wide range of mainstream eight-year-old tastes dominate the walls. Various pieces of personal stuff are stashed under the bed, under the mattress, and so on.

The only interesting, possibly odd thing about the room is the lack of toy guns or weapons that look anything like the real things. After his father's botched extraction, Shawn packed away all his realistic-looking war toys because they made him nervous. They are in a box under the bed.

Kitchen and Storage

This post-modern kitchen is the domain of the cook, Mario S. He presides over the kitchen at mealtimes, but lives off-site. The storage locker is grossly overstocked in case Anna should specifically ask for anything—anything at all—at one of the family's regular meals.

SITE SECURITY

The Brandis Development has its own security force, hired and maintained by the property management corporation but loosely overseen by Knight Errant Security. If necessary, use the Corporate Security Guard statistics on p. 205, **SRII,** but equip them with Ares Predator pistols (30 rounds of ammo), Uzi III SMGs (2 clips of ammo), and armored jackets (5/3), and give them Threat/Professional Ratings of 3/3. Knight Errant set up the site's security and now keeps an eye on it, but can only recommend changes to the management corporation. Under normal circumstances no Knight Errant security personnel actually work at Brandis.

Twelve security people are at the development at any given time. Two are posted in or near the lobby of every building, two stay in the main security office, and the remaining four patrol the property in pairs. All are equipped with two-way communication systems and broadcast emergency alarms that alert main security and the local Knight Errant office. Knight Errant reacts in force not because of their arrangement with Brandis Development, but because their contract with Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services includes that corp's employees and their families. For more information concerning Knight Errant's response, see **The Search Is On,** p. 32.

Security personnel conduct property patrols in a pair of off-the rack Ford Americars (use the statistics on p. 247, **SRII,** if necessary) equipped with two-way radios and white-light spotlights. The cars patrol the interior grounds and occasionally make a quick circuit of the outer perimeter and the neighboring community, but they always stay within about a block of the site.

CENTRAL SECURITY OFFICE

Brandis Development's central security office is located on the ground floor of the southwest building, in the same location as the security rooms in the main building. The wing of the southwest building that houses central security boasts Rating 8 maglocks, reinforced walls (Barrier Rating 10), and reinforced doors (Barrier Rating 8). The window looking into the lobby of the southwest building is made of ballistic glass (Barrier Rating 4) and has a slight refraction that imposes a +2 modifier on any ranged combat that takes place through it. This modifier does not apply if the window is shattered.

The central security office also contains the CPUs for the two levels of the development's computer system, as well as the physical components of the security processor. The office's alarms are hardwired to alert Knight Errant in case of a break-in. These systems are not tied into or even recognized by the development's computer system.

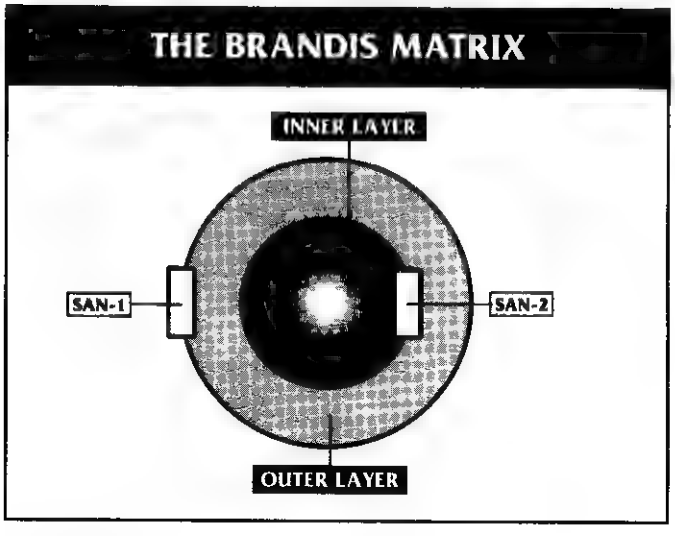
Security cameras are marked on all the development maps. These are standard color trideo cameras with low-light circuitry. Assume that all cameras scan a 120-degree arc in the most likely direction of trouble. Note that Brandis Development has no on-site magical protection of any kind.

Building security officers try to repel all intruders, but will not put residents in danger to do so. They will give chase if they can. In all cases they immediately contact *both* Knight Errant and Eagle Security Services Inc. (ESSI; see p. 135, **Denver**). ESSI responds in the amount of time indicated on pp. 53-54 of **Denver GM.** The gamemaster needs to determine ESSI's response forces and actions based on the relative strength of the player characters, as well as their actions. For more information, see **The Search Is On,** p. 31.

THE BRANDIS MATRIX

Brandis Development's computer system is very straightforward. It contains little to hide or protect, and so most of it is virtually undefended. Only the security processors and the inner-layer CPU have much in the way of real protection.

Any active alert from the Brandis system notifies Knight Errant of a problem, and a KE decker arrives in-system in 2D6 Combat Turns. For the decker's statistics, use the Corporate Decker on p. 56 of **Cast of Shadows,** but give him or her a Threat/Professional Rating of 6/3. Any Knight Errant decker arriving in the Brandis system automatically has all the appropriate passwords.



Outer Layer

External Path: NA/SIO/877-29291. SAN-1 (Orange-4, Access-4, Killer 3). Telecom number is publicly listed.

Internal Path: To/from inner layer via SAN-2 (Orange-5, Access-5, Killer 4).

Contents/Description: The entire Brandis system uses the UMS icon/image set of standardized polygons and

color codes. The outer layer contains most of the administration and building maintenance systems, plus their associated nodes and subsystems.

Layer CPU: Orange-5, Barrier-4.

Security/Defenses: None.

Inner Layer

External Path: None.

Internal Path: To/from outer layer via SAN-2 (Orange-5, Access 5, Killer 4).

Contents/Description: The inner layer holds all the critical or sensitive nodes and subsystems, including residential computer systems, certain administration systems and records, and security.

Residential SPUs: Orange-4, Access 4. Each building has one SPU, and each SPU is connected to I/O ports in each condo (usually networked into existing desktop computers). All the units in one building share the single SPU and a datastore connected to it.

Residential Datastore: Orange-4, Access 4, Scramble 3. Shared data storage for all residents. Each condo's partition has its own version of Scramble 3 to protect it.

Administration SPU: Orange-5, Access 5, Killer 4. This SPU handles the majority of the development's "sensitive" administration work (resident's complaints, security problem reports, and so on) and connects to a single datastore and a series of terminals (I/O ports) in various buildings and offices.

Administration Datastore: Orange-4, Access 3.

Administration I/O Ports: Orange-4, Access 4.

Security SPU: Red-4, Access 6, Blaster 4, Tar Pit 4. This security processor connects to all the security terminals (I/O ports), cameras and sensors (slave nodes), and the single datastore.

Security Datastore: Red-4, Access 6, Scramble 4.

Security I/O Ports: Red-4, Access 5.

Security Slave Nodes: Red-4, Access 5.

GENERAL FAMILY SCHEDULE

As noted in **Shining Bright School** (pp. 14–18) Peter Tomita leaves the family condo with Shawn Gaffney at about 7:30 A.M. every weekday. Tomita arrives at Brandis in his own car about 7:15 A.M. and has it parked by a valet while he awaits the family's Westwind 2000. Young Shawn, usually half-asleep, stumbles downstairs around 7:30 and the two drive off to school.

They return sometime between 4 P.M. and 4:30 P.M., depending on traffic and whether or not they have taken a side trip (see **Shining Bright School,** p. 14). On arriving back at Brandis, Tomita leaves, waits in the underground parking area if some other excursion is planned, or goes upstairs (on rare occasions). On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Tomita drives Shawn home to change clothes. He then drives the boy to the offices of Shawn's therapist, Marvin Singtree, for a 5:00 P.M. appointment. The session takes an hour, and the pair return home between 6:15 P.M. and 6:30 P.M. For more information, see **Other Opportunities,** p. 27.

Anna is picked up promptly at 7:00 A.M. for work Monday through Saturday by a corporate Toyota Elite limousine. If vehicle statistics are necessary, use those on p. 264, **SRII,** and use the Bodyguard Archetype on p. 49 of **SRII** for the chauffeur (raise the Threat/Professional Rating to 4/3). The drive to work takes 1D6 x 5 minutes, depending on traffic. She does not return home until after 6:00 P.M. To determine exactly when, start with a base time of 5:00 P.M. and add 2D6 x 30 minutes. Dinner is served at 7:00 P.M., regardless of whether Anna is home or not.

On Saturdays, Shawn has time to play with the few friends he has at the development or to go on a day trip with Tomita and his weekend nanny/governess, Kellie Ross. For Ms. Ross's statistics, use the Average People description in **Cast of Shadows,** p. 56. Ms. Ross also spends time with Shawn on Sunday to give Anna a day of rest.

SCHEDULE SPECIFICS

Define the particulars of the family's schedule within the broad outlines described above, especially in Shawn's case. The more complex and unexpected the schedule, the harder the players will find it to plan the extraction. Decide how taxing that planning should be based on the abilities of the players. Groups that enjoy plenty of direct, two-fisted action may prefer a simple, easy-to-plan-around schedule; those who prefer lots of planning and careful execution may relish the challenge of a terribly complex, unpredictable schedule.

Regardless of the schedule's complexity (or lack thereof), the runners will probably figure out that Shawn is vulnerable in only a few places and times—traveling to or from school or a weekend day trip, and at Marvin Singtree's office. For relevant information, see **Shining Bright School,** p. 14, and **Other Opportunities,** p. 28.

DEBUGGING

The things that may go wrong in this encounter depend on what the runners do. The worst possible frag-up happens if site security is tipped off while the player characters are going in, giving ESSI (and potentially Knight Errant) time to respond before the runners can grab Shawn. The last thing the runners want is a potential hostage situation or a blazing gunfight with smartgun-equipped ESSI or KE troopers.

Of course, the bigger the splash the runners make, the harder ESSI comes after them. And the harder Knight Errant comes after them. And the harder Audrey W. comes after them. And the harder—you get the picture.

If the runners don't try for the boy at Brandis Development, they might attempt the extraction at the Shining Bright School. (Go to **Shining Bright School**, p. 14.) They might also try to snatch him enroute to school, on a weekend day trip, or at his therapist's (go to **Other Opportunities**, p. 28). The runners might also continue digging up information if they chose to visit Brandis Development just to check it out. In that case, go to **Legwork,** p. 43.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Note: Because this encounter actually encompasses three potential mini-encounters, there is no Tell It to Them Straight section.

HOOKS

In any of the potential encounters described in the following pages, take the seemingly straightforward situation and twist things so that the players can never be quite sure whether things are going as planned, or if something terrible is about to happen.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Rather than at school or home, the runners may attempt to grab Shawn somewhere in transit (from home to school or vice versa, or to or from his therapist's office), on a day trip, at his therapist's office, or at his mother's office at Fuchs-Auberlien. (Of course, runners being runners, they're also likely to come up with something totally unexpected.)

ON THE ROAD

As stated in the encounters **Shining Bright School** and **Brandis Development,** bodyguard Peter Tomita drives Shawn to and from school and his therapist's office in the family's Eurocar Westwind 2000. To get to the school, Tomita heads west to Intercity 25 and follows that road south to Route 6, which he takes west. He leaves Route 6 at Sheridan Boulevard, and then turns left onto 10th Avenue and pulls up in front of the school. Returning, he retraces that route. To get to Doctor Martin Singtree's office from the school, Tomita returns to Route 6, taking that road until it crosses Intercity 25 and becomes 6th Avenue. He follows 6th Avenue to York Street, and then takes York Street north.

If the runners choose to snatch Shawn while the boy is on one of his weekend day trips, the location and circumstances are entirely up to the gamemaster. On most, if not all, such trips, Kellie Ross will be present. If she is, the runners may grab her too, presuming that having her around will make Shawn easier to control. Because the runners may try to stop the car just about anywhere, this section does not describe a specific ambush location or encounter. Instead, it offers guidelines and pointers for the gamemaster once the runners have decided when and where they wish to strike.

Tomita and Shawn travel primarily during rush hours at both ends of the day. Therefore the runners will find it virtually impossible to catch the Westwind alone on the road; that is, not surrounded by traffic. This fact works for and against the runners; traffic makes it easier to force the Westwind into a no-escape situation and also slows down any law enforcement response, but the runners will find it tougher to escape with their prize.

Once the drek hits the fan, Tomita knows that the runners are trying to kidnap Shawn rather than kill him; he assumes the runners are somehow connected to the botched extraction of Shawn's father. Therefore, he is not as concerned about gunfire hitting the boy (though he is concerned for his own safety, because taking out the Westwind's driver makes a certain amount of tactical sense). Also, he knows that the odds of a corporate strike team coming after him are extremely slim, and he therefore has no compunction about alerting local law enforcement (whereas, in the case of direct intra-corporate action, Tomita might worry about unholy alliances between the corp and the local law enforcement agency). He also has no second thoughts about heading for the protection of a border crossing station, or the grounds of a North American or quasi-North American megacorp such as Ares or Fuchi (though he will not seek sanctuary on the grounds of a European or Asian corp for fear of establishing debt to a foreign entity).

Keep in mind that Peter Tomita is a trained combat driver. He uses the car and its impressive speed and handling to his advantage for as long as he can. He also uses the local terrain to his best advantage, especially if the runners' pursuit vehicle is not up to the challenge. Once the Westwind starts taking damage, however, Tomita will bail from it, taking Shawn with him in the hope of disappearing into the surrounding neighborhood. He uses his headware telephone to tell local law enforcement where he is and where his pursuers are at all times.

Tomita also uses the stun-round ammunition he carries for fear of shooting passers-by. He uses regular ammunition if he runs out of stun ammo or if the runners start gunning for his head. If Shawn's life is endangered, either by the runners' actions or Tomita's own, Tomita surrenders the boy to the runners. His number one priority is Shawn's safety; if the best way to keep him safe is to hand him over to the opposition and get him back later, Tomita will do that rather than continue fighting.

Depending on where the runners attempt their grab, random bystanders may aid Tomita and Shawn. To determine whether or not local folks help out, roll 2D6. On a result of 4 or less, one street cop is nearby. Use the statistics given for the Street Cop archetype, p. 211, **SRII,** but equip him with a Browning Max-Power heavy pistol (2 clips of ammo) and an armored jacket (5/3) and give him a Threat/Professional Rating of 2/2. He arrives in 1D6 Combat Turns and immediately moves to assist Shawn if he can. On a result of 3 or less, some bystander other than a cop goes to Shawn's aid. The

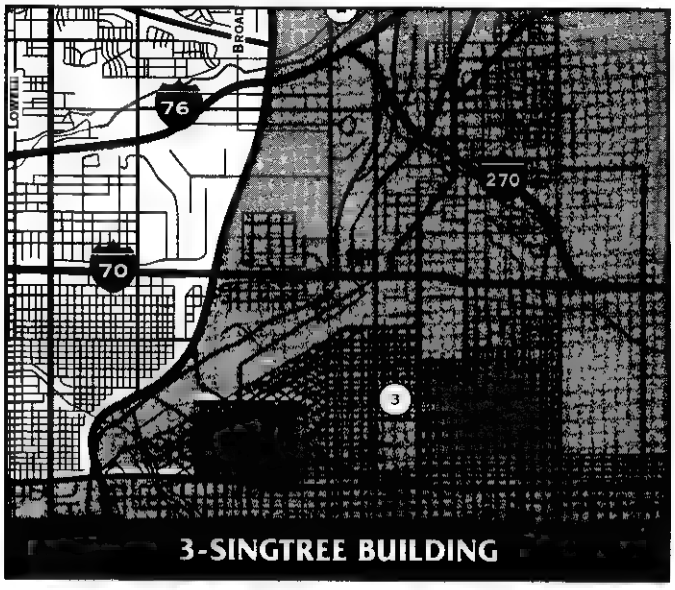
gamemaster determines what level of assistance arrives; perhaps a small gang composed of 1D6 + 1 members, a local piece of street muscle, or a local street mage if the magical odds need evening out. For any of these alternatives, use the Gang Member archetype (p. 57, **SRII**); the Gang Boss archetype (p. 207, **SRII**); or the Street Mage archetype (p. 61, **SRII**), respectively. None of these people should have Threat/Professional Ratings higher than 3/3. Also, depending on where the grab takes place or where the chase leads, locals might accidentally get in the way while trying to avoid the mayhem. Crowds of people qualify as partial cover (and despite what some players like to think, they don't have Barrier Ratings).

SINGTREE'S OFFICE

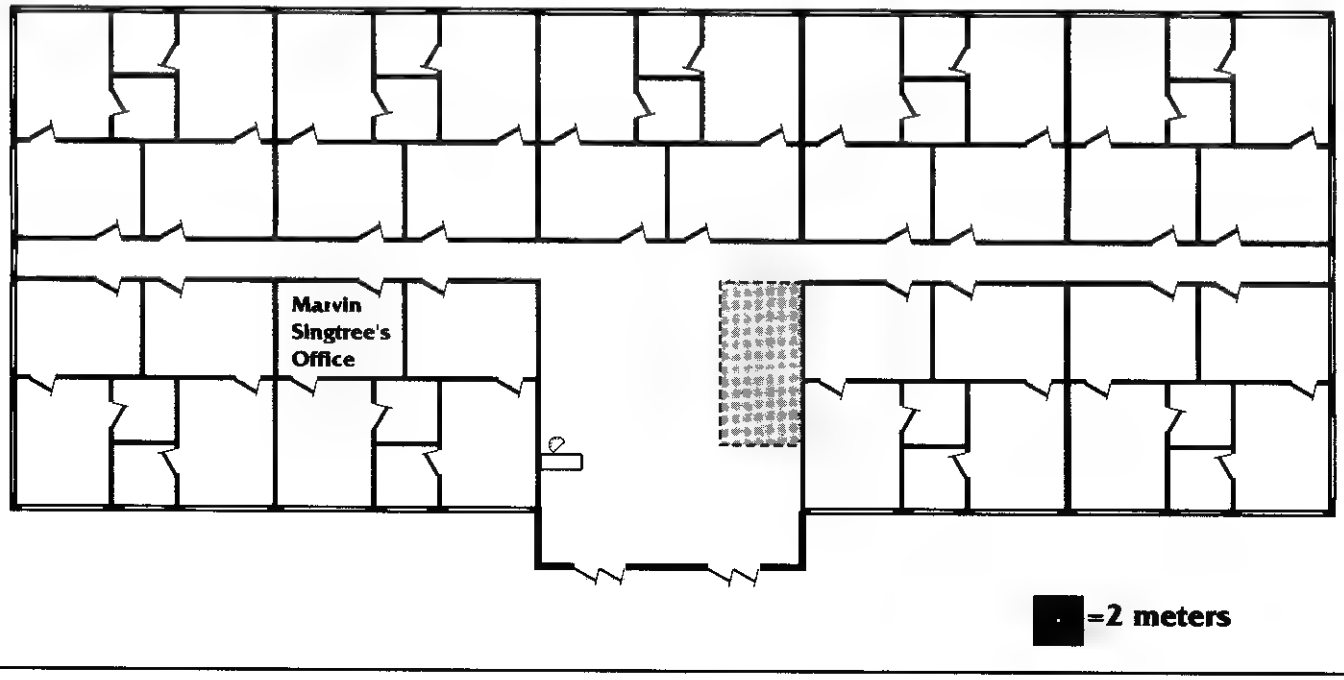
The unassuming office of Doctor Martin Singtree is located near York Street and East 28th Avenue in the UCAS Sector of the Front Range Free Zone, in a two-story brick building that houses a number of other medical offices. Parking is directly in front of the building, just off the road. The building contains 36 virtually identical offices that the management company leases to a variety of clients: mostly therapists, psychologists, and other "soft" science professionals.

All exterior walls have a Barrier Rating of 12, and all windows have a Barrier Rating of 3. Interior walls and all doors, including the one to the street, have a Barrier Rating of 6. The front doors also have Rating 6 maglocks, while all interior doors have Rating 4 maglocks. The building has no security camera, and no fancy sensors. A single security guard is present during business hours (9 A.M. to 8 P.M.). For the guard, use the Street Cop archetype on p. 211, **SRII,** but equip him with a Colt American L36 light pistol, two clips of ammo, and an armored vest (2/1) and give him a Threat/Professional Rating of 2/2. No after-hours appointments are permitted, though all the lessors have access to their offices at all times.

During business hours, 4D6 of the offices are open and busy with clients. Each has 1D6 + 2 staffers and clients present. All present qualify as Average People (see **Cast of Shadows,** p. 56), unless the gamemaster wants to spice up the mix by adding a few with exceptional abilities.



Medical Building Map



Upon seeing Doctor Singtree's office, the player characters may be surprised that Anna is sending her only son to a therapist who obviously deals primarily with a lower-class clientele. In fact, friends of Anna's who have had therapy sessions with Doctor Singtree—sessions they did not want their corporate masters to know about—recommended him to Anna. Dr. Singtree specializes in such private cases, and Anna preferred to use him rather than turn her son over to a corporate-sponsored expert in psychological conditioning.

Dr. Martin Singtree

Martin Singtree is a psychotherapist and is helping Shawn work through post-event trauma brought on by his father's extraction. He has been working with Shawn for some time now, and the boy is beginning to make progress. Singtree has also begun to learn that Shawn's problems have less to do with his father's abandonment of his family than with the dysfunction existing in that family.

Though Singtree is not a shaman, he follows the ways of the Owl totem. His office reflects a decidedly tribal aspect despite its location in UCAS territory. He does not and will not prescribe medication of any kind for his clients, nor does he recommend or use any technological therapy aids. Instead, he prefers a holistic approach to psychology.

Short and round in build, Singtree has dark, graying hair and wears large, round spectacles. He is warm and charming, a strength he relies on in his practice. His game statistics are based on those of Average People (see **Cast of Shadows,** p. 56), but all his Mental Attributes and his Professional Skill Rating are 5. He has a Threat/Professional Rating of 1/2.

Singtree's receptionist/assistant is a full-blooded Arapaho Indian named Nora. She too is Average People, but with a Threat/Professional Rating of 2/3. While Shawn is with the doctor, Peter Tomita sits in the waiting room, ignoring all Nora's attempts at suggestive eye contact.

Singtree's Files

Singtree's office computer is the desktop system he shares with his assistant. The system does not have continual Matrix access and so can only be reached when it is turned on during normal business hours. Its simple CPU and datastore share a Green-3 security code; the SAN/CPU also has an Access-2 program.

Singtree has a remarkable memory and retains almost everything he sees and hears, and so he keeps minimal paper and electronic files on his more sensitive patients. The file on Shawn Gaffney consists mostly of notes and observations, as well as pertinent personal and medical information. As Singtree has the bad habit of jotting down notes in outlandish psycho-jargon, deciphering Shawn's file requires a successful Psychology (4) Test. If a player character defaults to Intelligence on the Skill Web in an attempt to understand Singtree's notes, the Target Number for the necessary Success Test jumps to 12.

In his notes, Singtree blames much of Shawn's current psychological and emotional state on the poor care and inadequate attention of his parents. Unsure and confused about a great

many things, Shawn is finding potentially damaging ways to compensate, mostly through withdrawal and disassociation. Singtree is debating just how to approach the boy's mother about her son's condition and fears that the boy will be in therapy for most of his life unless changes occur in the family.

FUCHS-AUBERLIEN FINANCIAL SERVICES

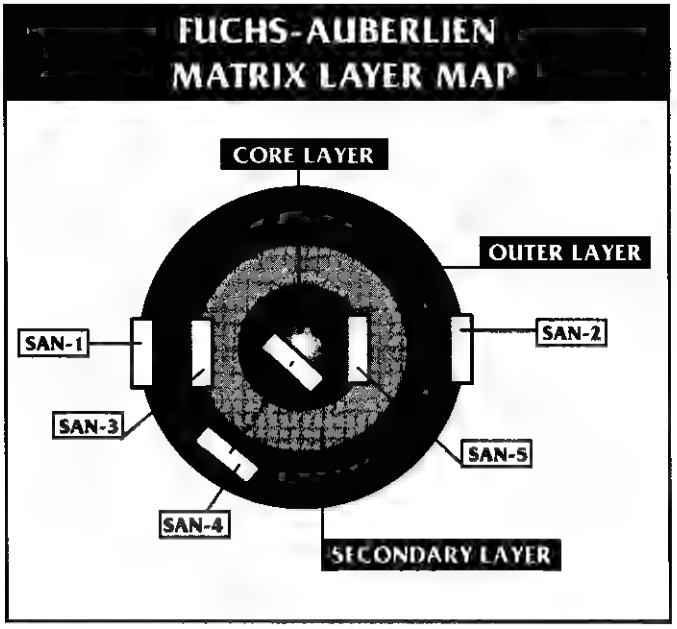
Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services' Front Range Free Zone facility occupies three floors of the Yamatetsu building in the non-contiguous UCAS Sector of downtown Denver. The Yamatetsu building is marked as Location Q on the color downtown map in the **Denver: City of Shadows** boxed set. No game information is given in that set for that building, but the gamemaster should not need any because Shawn Gaffney never visits his mother's workplace. Therefore, his kidnapping cannot take place there. Because the runners may wish to investigate the site before they discover that fact, the following information has been included in this encounter. Additional information appears in **Legwork,** p. 47.

Observation of the building will tell the runners that site security is pretty tight. Yamatetsu's own security people handle overall security, but enough Knight Errant officers and officials loiter on the premises to suggest that someone in the building uses them as a supplemental force. That someone is Fuchs Auberlien Financial Services, though the runners might not know that unless they do a little research. Passcards control entry to the building, and any unknown or unexpected guests get shunted into a small holding area off to one side of the spacious lobby. Someone from one of the companies in the building must come downstairs to identify and vouch for them before they can stir a step beyond the holding area. These days, Yamatetsu has become a stickler for security; internal security problems that have nothing to do with this adventure have made the corp especially nervous.

If the runners actually try to grab Shawn within the UCAS non-contiguous sector (a truly crazy idea at best), Lone Star Security is all over them in a matter of moments. For more information, see **The Search Is On,** p. 31. If by some wild circumstance the runners choose to raid the Yamatetsu building or computer systems, the gamemaster must design the building's layout and defenses. For more information on Yamatestu Corporation, see pp. 150–52, **Corporate Shadowfiles.** Note that Fuchs Auberlien's computer system is separate from the building's systems; the FAFS system is described below.

Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services Computer System

Player characters can find no information relevant to this adventure in Fuchs Auberlien Financial Services' computer system that they cannot just as easily dig up using standard legwork (see **Legwork,** p. 47). If a player-character decker insists on making a run into the FAFS system, he or she will find the layers described below. Note that the outer two layers are relatively undefended compared to the core, a white-hot kernel of nasty IC.



Outer Layer

External Paths:

NA/SIO 2928-1028: SAN-1 (Red-4, Access 5, Killer 5). Publicly listed telecom number.

NA/SIO-2918-2918: SAN-2 (Red-4, Access 5, Killer 5). Unlisted telecom number, used for automatic data transfers.

Internal Paths: SAN-3 to/from secondary layer (Orange-4, Access 4, Blaster 4), SAN-4 to/from core layer (Red-5, Access 6, Blaster 5).

Contents/Description: The outer layer of the Fuchs Auberlien Financial Services system is lightly sculpted, with the look and feel of a financial or accounting office from the late 1800s. The system looks sketchy and almost unfinished. Most of the SPUs, terminal access ports (I/O ports), and reference datastores are located in this layer. Non-critical information gets transferred to the secondary layer for processing and storage, while critical data goes to the core layer for manipulation. This layer contains no information important to this adventure.

Layer CPU: Red-5, Access 6, Trace and Burn 4.

Security/Defenses: None beyond those present in the individual nodes.

Secondary Layer

External Paths: None

Internal Paths: SAN-3 to/from Outer Layer (Orange-4, Access 4, Blaster 4), SAN-5 to/from core layer (Red-5, Access 6, Blaster 5).

Contents/Description: This layer has the same light sculpting as the outer layer. Most of the corporation's data crunching and projecting from non-critical information occurs in this layer. The layer has three processing SPUs and associated datastores. This layer contains no information important to this adventure.

Processing SPUs: Red-4, Access 5, Killer 4. These three SPUs handle data processing.

Processing Datastores: Red-4, Access 5, Tar Pit 4, Scramble 4. Each processing SPU has a dedicated datastore.

Layer CPU: Red-5, Access 6, Trace and Burn 5.

Security/Defenses: None beyond those present in the individual nodes.

Core Layer

External Path: None

Internal Paths: SAN-4 to/from outer layer (Red-5, Access 6, Blaster 5), SAN-5 to/from secondary layer (Red-5, Access 6, Blaster 5).

Contents/Description: The core layer is not sculpted and uses the UMS icon/image set. It has two data-processing SPUs, each with a dedicated datastore. This layer contains no information important to this adventure.

Processing SPUs: Red-5, Access 6, Blaster 5. These two SPUs handle data processing.

Processing Datastores: Red-5, Access 6, Tar Pit 5, Scramble 5. Each processing SPU has a dedicated datastore.

Layer CPU: Red-6, Access 6, Blaster 6, Trace and Burn 5.

Security/Defenses: Probe-6 IC linked to Blaster-6 IC roams the core layer (see p. 19, **Virtual Realities**). Gamemasters who do not have **Virtual Realities** should treat the Probe IC as a mobile Access-6 program accompanied by Blaster-6 IC.

DEBUGGING

Plenty can go wrong here, depending on the runners' choices. They might run into heavy security if they try to storm FAFS (bad move), or get caught trying to abscond with Shawn on the road. The gamemaster should be prepared for anything the players may throw at him. The biggest potential problems are public gunfights and mayhem, which will attract rapid law-enforcement response. For more information, see **The Search Is On,** p. 31.

THE SEARCH IS ON

Note: Because this encounter describes the possible reactions of several law-enforcement and other agencies, this encounter provides no Tell It to Them Straight section.

HOOKS

See the drek.
See the drek hit the fan.
See everybody and their brothers start looking for the runners.
Can you say "pressure?"
We knew ya could.

BEHIND THE SCENES

This encounter describes the immediate and long-term reactions of various law-enforcement agencies, corporations, and individuals to the kidnapping of Shawn Gaffney. The potential further actions the runners and Shawn might make in response appear in the following encounter, **Lying Low.**

The biggest initial threat comes from various local law enforcement agencies: Pueblo Security Enterprises in the Pueblo Sector (site of the Shining Bright School), Eagle Security Services in the Sioux Sector (site of the Brandis Development), and Lone Star Security Services in the UCAS Sector (site of Dr. Singtree's office and FAFS headquarters). Depending on where the runners choose to make their move, one or more of these forces will respond to Shawn Gaffney's extraction.

In the long term, the runners must deal with Knight Errant Security. If they're lucky, they'll be spared KE's attention for a few hours.

PUEBLO SECURITY ENTERPRISES

Pueblo Security Enterprises reacts only to events in and around the Shining Bright School. Once PSE decides to abandon pursuit of the runners, the Pueblo outfit becomes secondary to Knight Errant because Shawn is technically an "employee" of a megacorporation and under the protection of that corp's licensed security provider. PSE will conduct an investigation and attempt to discover where the runners have taken Shawn, but they will give the case low priority because of Knight Errant; after all, why should the Pueblo Sector waste public money and time trying to locate a foreign national when a corporate security force is looking into it?

To determine how fast PSE responds to any incidents in the Pueblo Sector, see pp. 53–54, **Denver GM.** Determine if PSE forces are using aircraft and apply all appropriate modifiers.

Determine the level of PSE response based on the runners' relative strength as well as their actions. For example, if the runners use magic, PSE brings in a combat mage. In this case, make a second dice roll to determine response time (as on pp. 53–54, **Denver GM**), but add a +3 modifier. If the runners employ drones or heavy weapons, PSE rolls out their big guns, and so on. Gamemasters may wish to use the troopers, equipment, and vehicles described in the **Lone Star Sourcebook** for the PSE (but remember to change the logos and arm patches).

EAGLE SECURITY SERVICES (SIOUX)

Eagle Security Services Inc. (ESSI) responds in about the same way as PSE, but only to incidents in Sioux territory (at or near the Brandis Development). Because Anna Coleridge-Gaffney and her son are resident aliens under corporate protection and hold UCAS passports, ESSI works with Knight Errant in a full investigation. Though jurisdictional battles occur between the two, the infighting does not affect the nuts and bolts of the investigation; in fact, the runners probably never notice it.

To determine how fast ESSI responds to any incidents in the Sioux Sector, see pp. 53–54, **Denver GM.** Determine which vehicles the security forces are traveling in and apply all appropriate modifiers. Determine the level of ESSI response based on the runners' strength and their actions; if the runners use magic and ESSI brings in a combat mage, add a +4 modifier to the second dice roll for response time. If the runners employ drones or heavy weapons, ESSI rolls out their big guns, and so on. Gamemasters may wish to use the troopers, equipment, and vehicles in the **Lone Star Sourcebook** for the ESSI forces.

For ESSI's contribution to the investigation, see also **On the Trail,** p. 30.

LONE STAR SECURITY SERVICES DENVER (UCAS)

Lone Star only gets involved with Shawn Gaffney's extraction if the runners grab the boy while the family's Westwind is in UCAS territory—at or near Dr. Singtree's office or near the FAFS/Yamatetsu offices in the UCAS non-contiguous downtown sector. To determine how fast Lone Star responds to any incidents in the UCAS Sector, see pp. 53–54, **Denver GM.** As with PSE and ESSI, the gamemaster determines if Lone Star forces are using aircraft and applies all appropriate modifiers. Determine the level of Lone Star's response based on the runners' strength and their actions. If the runners use magic and Lone Star brings in a combat mage, add a +2 modifier to the dice roll for the mage's response time. Gamemasters can certainly use the troopers, equipment, and vehicles in the **Lone Star Sourcebook** (no surprise).

Lone Star has little to do with any long-term investigation of the kidnapping. Though Anna and her son are UCAS citizens, they are currently living in a foreign country (the Sioux Sector), which

takes the matter completely out of Lone Star's hands. Technically, the UCAS FBI and—to a lesser extent—the CIA are involved but both opt to keep an eye on the case in an advisory capacity. Because Anna and her son are attached to a multinational megacorporation, Lone Star and the UCAS government have little incentive to lend a strong hand to the corp's investigation.

KNIGHT ERRANT

Knight Errant cannot respond fast enough to prevent the actual extraction of Shawn Gaffney. By the time word gets to them through the various law enforcement agencies and so on, the runners and their prize should be long gone. Once Knight Errant knows what's up, however, they take control of the situation almost immediately. First, they place Anna under tighter security and debrief Peter Tomita, if possible. Within half an hour of the kidnapping, Anna is under Knight Errant's protection at her condo and the entire Brandis Development is under heavy guard. This done, KE takes steps to locate the missing boy.

An hour and a half or so after the kidnapping, two events occur almost simultaneously. A KE forensic magic team arrives at the location of the kidnapping (or a series of locations, depending on how the extraction took place), and KE mages begin ritual magic in an effort to find Shawn (see **Ritual Magic,** below). The forensics team begins searching for spilled blood or body fluids and/or parts that the runners may have left behind. Use the following guidelines to determine what the forensics team finds.

Any single Serious or Deadly wound suffered by a runner leaves blood behind, regardless of how the runner got that wound. Serious wounds leave behind half as much blood as Deadly wounds. If multiple people took Serious or Deadly wounds in a firefight surrounding the kidnapping, the samples that remain might well intermix. The gamemaster determines whether or not this happened based on the circumstances; for example, if no one was near anyone else when several runners got hurt, no intermingling occurs.

Any samples are subject to the Tissue Sample Viability rules on p. 35 of the **Grimoire, Second Edition**. The KE forensic sorcerer-adepts have Sorcery (Forensic Magic) Ratings of 5 and can use the Preserve Spell (p. 129, **Grimoire II**). If the runners leave usable blood samples behind, assume the KE forensics team retrieves and preserves half of them. If the ritual magic used to find Shawn Gaffney fails, the mages use these samples to find the runners. Note that when such a ritual is attempted, the sample becomes part of the ritual and therefore vulnerable to attack from astral space as if it were magically active. A gutsy shadowrunner might want to track the Sending of the ritual and destroy the sample.

Ritual Magic

Knight Errant uses three combat mages for the ritual, along with another mage providing astral protection at the site of their casting. For the combat mages, use the Combat Mage archetype on p. 50, **SRII**, but give them Threat/Professional Ratings of 4/3. For the additional mage, use the Former Wage Mage archetype on p. 56, **SRII**, but ignore any references to Conjuring and give her a Threat/Professional Rating of 3/3. The mages cast a Force 5 Detect Life spell to find the boy and determine his exact location. Then they shadow him astrally until KE troopers can physically reach the scene. For all the steps involved in this ritual, see **Ritual Sorcery,** pp. 133–36, **SRII.**

Combined, the combat mages have a Magic Pool of 12 dice for each stage of the ritual. The Base Target Number is 5. If the runners had the foresight to put Shawn under some sort of magical protection, apply the appropriate modifier and determine how long it takes the KE mages to anchor the material link. At this point, assuming the material link was successful, the Sending begins. Determine the time and effects according to the rules on p. 136, **Grimoire II.** From this point on, magicians who check on Shawn might notice the ritual homing in on him.

Once the Sending is complete, the combat mages cast the spell per normal rules. If the spell is successfully cast and no one appears to have noticed, the fourth mage begins to track the path of power in an attempt to find Shawn (see astral tracking rules, p. 149, **SRII**). Once the mage has found Shawn, he or she makes note of the boy's location in the real world, zips back to KE's HQ (in the UCAS Sector's non-contiguous region), tells them where Shawn is and then returns to put the place under astral surveillance. The ritual ends (after all, KE needs those combat mages for other duties) and KE troopers move in to rescue the boy.

At this point, the gamemaster determines what happens. How much force KE shows up with, how gung-ho for a fight they are, whether or not the runners get tipped off and so on all depend on too many factors to allow for a written set piece. The specific actions the runners chose to take matter too much. No matter what, however, Knight Errant spends half an hour to forty-five minutes to muster and deploy its troops (and then the fun begins).

Reach Out and Touch Someone

KE can also find out where Shawn is if he uses his portable phone to call home or if he summons DocWagon™ by using his alert-trigger bracelet. Both of these events may be prompted by circumstances described in **Lying Low,** beginning on p. 35. If he calls home, KE officers tell him to leave the connection open and place the phone back in his bag. It takes KE 2D6 minutes to determine the general area of Denver from which Shawn's call originated (by isolating the cellular telecom transponder picking up his call). It takes them another 4D6 minutes to get detection gear into the area, and another 2D6 minutes to track the call locally. Troops begin mobilizing almost immediately once the call is received.

If DocWagon notifies KE of Shawn's whereabouts (and they would, because KE has an agreement with DocWagon that the docs will notify them whenever anyone under their protection requests service), KE has troopers on site in three times the time it takes DocWagon to respond.

FUCHS-AUBERLIEN FINANCIAL SERVICES

Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services acts solely through Knight Errant. They offer a 50,000 nuyen reward for any leads resulting in the safe return of Shawn Gaffney to his mother. This

offer has an impact on Knight Errant's long-term investigation; see **On The Trail,** below, for more information.

DASSURN SECURITIES AND INVESTMENTS

Executives at Dassurn Securities and Investments are surprised by the kidnapping. Despite what might be said or inferred at some point in the adventure, this corp knows they had nothing to do with it. If asked, they say as much through a corporate mouthpiece. In spite of the best efforts of the runners or the cybersnoop Audrey W., Colin Gaffney refuses to answer any questions. His refusal to even make a statement about his son might make the runners question his concern for the boy.

CORPORATION X

Executives of Corporation X, the true instigators of events, wait a few hours and then quietly contact Anna. They inform her that her son has been spirited out the city and is being kept safe and sound—for the moment. If she ever wants to see Shawn again, she must come to work for them. Anna takes a few days to decide and ultimately turns the corp down. For the timing and ramifications of this event, see the encounter **Lying Low,** pp. 35–37.

AUDREY W.

Within a few hours of Shawn's kidnapping, Audrey W. learns about it and flies to Denver with a few staff members. Eight hours after Shawn is grabbed, Audrey's team sets up shop in the Hyatt-Star Regency in the Sioux Sector (see the map on p. 141, **Denver**). Audrey discovers that Knight Errant was responsible for the family's security and attempts to get a comment from them but fails. Two hours later she airs a story on the kidnapping, using any images she can dig up: archival footage of Colin Gaffney's extraction, covert surveillance footage of Shawn on one of his day trips with Peter Tomita and Kellie Ross, and so on.

As might be expected, the show makes neither the runners nor Knight Errant look good. It does, however, prominently display Shawn's face in nearly every home and bar in Denver. At the gamemaster's discretion, it might show the runners in action if circumstances put them in the path of a pedestrian with a mini-camera. It also spurs Knight Errant to greater efforts; Audrey's report is tarnishing their image. They file a complaint with her supervisors, but they know it won't do much good.

Sufficient time has passed since Colin Gaffney's extraction to Dassurn Securities and Investments, and so more people are willing to talk. Audrey's ongoing investigation finally starts to turn up bits and pieces of information, much of which she includes in her daily updates. If the runners are not doing legwork or are failing at it, Audrey's reports are a good way to make sure they get missing or necessary information.

Audrey also tries to track down the runners. She first spreads word on the streets that she wants to speak with those responsible for the kidnapping, if they are still in town. Seventy hours after the kidnapping, word reaches the runners that Audrey W. wants to meet with them. (If the runners are out on the street doing legwork, they hear about it that way. Most likely, however, the team member doing electronic legwork hears about the requested meet via the Nexus/Shadowland. Being at the heart of illicit information in North America means information flows better both ways.)

If the runners agree to the meet (they shouldn't; it's a dumb idea), arrange a suitable meeting time and place. Audrey's people suggest a time she'll be on the air—what better scoop than an exclusive interview on international trideo with the vile shadowrunners responsible for destroying Shawn's life? If the runners are paying attention, they request a different time for the meet.

If a calm, safe meeting does occur, Audrey W. acts significantly more subdued than the razor-sharp, firebrand image she protects on her show. She wants to know what's going on, who's responsible, if the boy is safe, and so on. Unless the runners are *really* dumb, she gets no helpful answers to those questions (nor did she expect to). Perceptive runners might notice that Audrey seems to have a hidden motive for all her concerns. Have the runner or runners in question make an opposed test using the character's Intelligence (for logical deduction) or Charisma (for empathic response), whichever is higher, against Audrey's Willpower Rating of 5. Consult the table below for the result.

Successes	Result
1	Yup, she's definitely hiding something.
2–3	Whatever she's hiding, it's got something to do with the boy.
4+	Hey, she's really concerned about Shawn's safety, really!

The more perceptive or empathic runners pick up on the fact that Shawn's plight is triggering all sorts of subconscious emotional reactions in Audrey because it reminds her of her own terrible childhood.

Ultimately, an encounter with Audrey simply provides the runners with additional food for thought and a few more options when they must decide what to do about Shawn (see **Decision Time**, p. 38). Whether the runners meet with Audrey or not, she continues to harass them on-air and continues to search for them. The runners should hear through the grapevine that she's out there looking for them, and they should feel a little pressure. However, Audrey will not locate them before they must make their tough decision.

If the runners are working the streets, especially in an effort to find out how much progress Knight Errant is making in their investigation, they might even cross Audrey's path as she does her own legwork. Of course, the runners recognize her, but she does not recognize them.

ON THE TRAIL

The following timeline describes the major events that occur following Shawn's kidnapping and the approximate number of hours after the kidnapping that those events take place. Use it to help keep track of where the runners are as things happen. For convenient photocopying, this timetable is duplicated in the back of this book.

EVENT TIMELINE

Time Elapsed	Event
DAY ONE	
00:00	Shawn is kidnapped. The clock starts ticking.
00:15	Knight Errant begins its official investigation.
00:30	Anna arrives at the Brandis Development (if she is not already there) under heavy Knight Errant protection.
01:30	A KE forensic magic team arrives at the crime scene and searches it for blood or other body fluids/parts left behind by the runners. KE combat mages begin a ritual-magic search for Shawn Gaffney.
04:00	Corp X contacts Anna with their demands. She tells no one.
05:30 (or before)	The material link portion of the ritual is complete. The Sending begins.
08:00	Audrey W. arrives in Denver and begins snooping.
	Shawn begins to wonder why no one is taking him to his father. He withdraws into silence.
10:00	Audrey W. airs her first broadcast on the boy's kidnapping. She blasts the runners for endangering the boy, creating a public safety hazard, and so on. She also blasts KE and the appropriate law enforcement agency (PSE, ESSI, or Lone Star) for letting it happen.
10:30 (or before)	The Sending portion of the ritual is complete, and so KE may now know the runners' location. A KE mage follows the astral trail toward Shawn.
22:30 (or before)	The KE mage finds Shawn. KE deploys ground forces.
DAY TWO	
34:00	Audrey W. airs another report on the kidnapping. She states that Shawn was undergoing therapy for trauma connected to his father's extraction and suggests that the kidnapping will make him worse. She also reports that Dassurn Securities and Investments denies any connection to the kidnapping.
38:00	Shawn begins to believe the runners are not going to take him to his father. He feels afraid, but reveals little of his inner turmoil except when he speaks.
DAY THREE	
49:00	The fact that his mother is going to be mad at him begins to gnaw at Shawn. His discomfort is evident, but he says nothing unless one of the runners asks him about it. Unless the runners asks keep him calm, he might trigger his DocWagon bracelet or phone home (if he can).
58:00	Audrey W. airs another report on the kidnapping, citing sources who said that the shadowrunners hired were out-of-towners recruited specifically for the job. She also reports on KE's efforts the day of the kidnapping. (This may be the first time the runners hear this information; present it in a way that makes them feel they barely escaped.)
DAY FOUR	
70:00	The runners learn that Audrey W. wants to meet with them.
82:00	Audrey W. airs another report, this time interviewing a shadowrunner allegedly connected to Colin Gaffney's extraction. His identity hidden, he reveals that Shawn Gaffney was never a target. This knowledge makes Colin Gaffney the focus of Audrey's attacks. She also reports developments in the investigation.
92:00	Shawn, convinced no one wants him, becomes distraught and refuses to eat. If he has not used the DocWagon bracelet or tried to phone home, he tries one or the other in 1D6 hours.
DAY FIVE	
106:00	Audrey W. airs yet another report, stating for the first time that there may be some question as to who's responsible for Shawn's disappearance. Her admittedly low-placed sources in Dassurn Securities assure her that the corp actually had nothing to do with the kidnapping. Audrey also reports any developments in the investigation.
117:00	Shawn decides he doesn't want to go home.
DAY SIX	
128:00	Audrey W. airs another report, claiming to have information that the kidnappers have contacted Anna. She has no specifics of their demands or Anna's response. She also reports any developments in the investigation.
130:00	Anna tells Corp X "no deal."
132:00	Corp X tells the runners the deal is off and instructs them to turn the boy loose.

DEBUGGING

If the runners forget about the threat of ritual magic, the adventure could end pretty quickly. If this occurs and you want to continue the story, have someone tip off the runners or have KE come down heavy on them; for the rest of the adventure, the runners stay barely one step ahead of the "law" (hopefully).

Audrey W. exists mostly to bring additional elements into play. If the players make her a stronger plot element than originally intended, improvise.

For information about what Shawn and the runners do after the kidnapping, go to **Lying Low**, p. 35.

LYING LOW

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

You check on the kid again. He's exactly the same as when you checked on him last: quiet. He's always quiet, staring off into nowhere or at the computer he keeps playing with. His body tenses as if he knows you're watching him, but he doesn't turn toward you. You have to speak first, because you know he won't.

HOOKS

The runners have been baby-sitting Shawn for close to a week, and they begin to learn about him in this encounter. Getting across the nuances of Shawn's character and personality may be difficult. He's damaged, hurt, emotionally adrift in the world. He's at the stage where a child learns about emotional attachments, and all he feels from his parents is abandonment.

Forge some kind of sympathetic link between one or more of the runners and Shawn. Even the hardest-bitten shadowrunner must have something strong, something noble, hiding deep inside. Otherwise, what's the point? Shawn should touch that something, reminding the runners that life is more than karma and nuyen.

BEHIND THE SCENES

This encounter deals with Shawn's reaction to the kidnapping and the days he spends with the shadowrunners. Kellie Ross may or may not be present as well. If the runners grabbed her in the hope that she'd take care of Shawn for them, they could not have been more wrong. Kellie reacts very badly to her situation, becoming at various times angry or desperately afraid. She cannot deal with what has happened and becomes dysfunctional after only a few hours. She goes through periods of compliance followed by rebellion, but even at her most "with it" she is of little use to Shawn or the runners.

Shawn doesn't know what to make of Kellie's reactions; she's become a very different person than the woman who took him places on weekends because his mother was too busy or too tired. Because he is not particularly fond of her, Kellie's negative response to what has occurred does not affect Shawn as much as one might expect.

SHAWN'S REACTION

Part of Shawn still believes he was supposed to go with his father when Colin Gaffney defected from Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services. Ever since, Shawn has half-heartedly awaited the day when some shadowrunner would come to take him away. At the same time, he remembers the pain his mother inadvertently allowed him to see when her husband fled, and Shawn wonders if his disappearance might provoke the same feeling. Of course, he also blames his mother for driving his father away—you get the picture. Shawn's feelings about his father's extraction and his family in general are very confused, leading to a variety of reactions discussed in the following paragraphs and summarized on the timeline on p. 34 of **The Search Is On.** All the times and intervals noted for Shawn's reactions should be used as guidelines to help the gamemaster judge how quickly or slowly he or she can build up a clear picture of Shawn's emotional state. The boy's feelings should seem to change naturally, rather than shifting because the gamemaster has decided to play out another scene with Shawn.

Shawn displays quiet excitement when kidnapped, especially if the runners make a big, showy display of it. The wilder and louder it gets, the more Shawn slips out of his shell—as long as no one gets hurt. The moment anyone takes a Serious or Deadly physical wound, Shawn's whole attitude changes. The shutters slam closed again and he stares, frozen and unable to react, at the recipient of the wound (especially if that person is dead). He stays that way until he can shake off his terror, but the frightening sight continues to affect him for some time. For specific information on how to handle Shawn's trauma, see his description in **Cast of Shadows,** p. 50.

Shawn reacts adversely if he witnesses any further incidents of violence, even casual "friendly threats between friends" by the player characters. If a major gunfight erupts with Knight Errant and the runners flee for a safer haven, they will probably have to drag a terrified Shawn along.

Shawn assumes he will be taken to his father, and so he becomes confused when he arrives at the safe house instead. Eight hours or so pass before his anxiety builds fully. The runners may be able to deal with Shawn's confusion by lying to him, but that will only work for so long. Faced with uncertainty about his fate, he withdraws into the quiet solitude of his toys, games and innermost thoughts. If the runners try to talk to Shawn at this point, see **Talking to the Boy** and **The Music Inside,** pp. 36 and 37 of this section.

After Shawn dwells on his future for awhile, he concludes that the runners aren't taking him to his father at all. He no longer knows what they want or what he wants, nor can he conceive of what might happen to him. Even the sight of the player characters begins to scare him, especially those who project a tough-guy, bad-news image. He withdraws even further from his captors, regarding the shadowrunners hesitantly and even a little fearfully.

Roughly fifty hours into his captivity, Shawn starts to fear his mother's reaction to all this. Naturally, he assumes she will blame him, and he really becomes afraid; a runner watching him might actually see him weeping. If a player character can get the boy to talk about his fears, the runners may catch a glimpse of the boy's inner turmoil. If Shawn is left to himself at this point, or if the shadowrunner gets him to open up but then cannot assure him that everything will be okay, Shawn may try to use either his DocWagon bracelet or the portable phone in his bag (assuming that neither have been taken away from him or disabled). Decide how to play these events, depending on whether or not the pacing of the adventure needs a kick in the pants. Decide whether Shawn tries the bracelet or the phone, depending on which scene you're prepared to orchestrate and which one is better held in reserve for later in the story.

As another forty-plus hours or so crawl by, Shawn convinces himself that no one wants him, or that his mother will forget about him the way she forgot about his father if he's gone for much longer. He becomes visibly distraught and despondent, refusing to eat. If the runners do not try to reassure him now, Shawn tries the bracelet or phone (whichever he has not yet used), within 1D6 hours of the runners' attempt to talk to him.

He dwells on his feelings of abandonment for another day or so and slowly convinces himself that he doesn't want to be with his parents anyway. He rejects them before they can reject him. Shawn tells one or more of the runners quite calmly that he doesn't want to go home, pointing out that his father left without him and his mother hardly notices him when he's around. He tells himself that his mother won't miss him any more than she missed his father, and that he himself doesn't care. Shawn has constructed this indifferent facade to keep the real emotions churning inside him at a manageable level. The emotional mask he wears is very fragile, but it's holding him together. If a particularly careless runner pushes the wrong buttons, teases him with the wrong comments or does something to force him to face his true feelings, Shawn falls apart into a shattered emotional wreck.

At this point, even coaxing him toward dealing with his emotions (which he *cannot* get straightened out in his current situation) pushes him over the edge. He begins to shift between extreme, unfocused anger and utter emotional seclusion. Even if the runners leave him alone, by the dawn of the sixth day they can tell he's falling apart. He might hold together until the runners decide his fate, but that depends largely on what he learns (or rather, what the runners know) about his mother's decision regarding the unnamed corp that hired his kidnappers.

At some point, some players may suggest grabbing Dr. Singtree to help Shawn. The runners can certainly accomplish this; if they succeed, Singtree can keep Shawn together through the events of the story. But once Singtree gets Shawn to open up, the doctor tells the runners in no uncertain terms that they are fragging the boy up. He also tells them that Shawn's problems lie much deeper than the kidnapping or even Colin Gaffney's extraction; they began with an environment devoid of love and two parents who pay little attention to him. Singtree offers no solutions, except to state his belief that Shawn's environment must change if he is to have any chance at normal emotional growth. Singtree does not state outright that the boy should be taken away from the parents who obviously don't know how to nurture him, but that is in fact what he believes. If the runners ask him what he thinks of that idea, he tells them that such a solution might solve some problems, but could create others.

TALKING TO THE BOY

Getting Shawn to talk about anything is a chore. Getting him to talk about anything important is a monumental task. To get him to speak at all requires a successful Charisma (8) Test. The extent to which Shawn actually communicates depends on the number of successes rolled; consult the following table.

SHAWN'S RESPONSES

Successes	Result
1	Monosyllabic responses.
2–3	Multisyllabic responses, but Shawn says nothing much.
4+	Still reserved, Shawn holds an actual conversation with the runner in question.

The runners can make only one attempt to talk with Shawn every six hours. Once a runner's Charisma Test succeeds, Shawn continues talking to that runner, but only at the test's level of success. If the runner wants to try again in order to improve the result, he or she must wait six hours.

Getting Shawn to talk about serious things, such as his parents and the emotions that are eating him up, requires a different process. A runner attempting to talk to Shawn about "serious stuff," as Singtree refers to these issues, must make a longer-term effort. Keep track of the total number of successes earned from each Charisma (8) Test made by an individual runner. To increase the total, the character must risk his level of success every six hours in the hope of a longer-term result. Shawn becomes more responsive (though not more open) to any runner who achieves more than 10 cumulative successes. The runner must accumulate at least 15 successes before he or she can even broach the subject of Shawn's parents (except in the most superficial manner) without prompting Shawn to withdraw. The runner must achieve a total of more than 20 successes to persuade Shawn to openly talk about his parents and his confused emotions regarding them. If more than one player character tries to get Shawn to open up, apply a cumulative +1 modifier to the target number for each character after the first in every six-hour period. If too many people badger and cross-examine Shawn, he clams up.

Keep in mind that getting Shawn to talk about his conflicting emotions does not mean that the runners can help him resolve or deal with them. That's just not going to happen within the scope of this adventure. At best, the runners can only gain some insight into what is troubling the boy.

At various times, Shawn becomes emotional and needs calming down. The player whose character is attempting to deal with him must make a Charisma (12) Test and must roll at least 1 success to calm Shawn for 2D6 minutes. To calm him for the duration of each emotional outburst, the character must achieve 3 or more successes. Runners who are building Charisma Test success totals receive a –1 modifier to the target number of the Charisma (12) Test if they have 10 or more success, a –2 modifier for 15 or more successes, and a –4 modifier for more than 20 successes.

THE MUSIC INSIDE

Shawn has unrecognized potential in the area of computer-generated music (as opposed to music generated by physical instruments). Thus far, however, his isolated corporate upbringing and education has exposed him exclusively to music produced by classical instruments, and those sounds bore him. The only electronically generated music he's ever heard (apart from synthetic instruments tuned to accurately mimic physical instruments) are the simple tones generated by the mathematics program on his computer. This program fascinates him, but he has not yet figured out (consciously or subconsciously) whether the math or the music intrigues him.

Depending on what the runners do with Shawn or around him during their time together, they may provoke some response from him to indicate his hidden affinities. They might play some modern music, or perhaps create some if any of the runners are so inclined. In either case, Shawn instantly perks up and pays attention to the music. He asks questions about it and wants to hear it again. Shawn is also willing to talk about the music and the sounds without any of the runners having to make Charisma Tests. The subject intrigues him, and the runners can see light in his eyes. He is too young to make much sense of his fascination, but the beginnings are there. If by chance a particularly kind-hearted runner hunts down a music program aimed at Shawn's age level, the boy shows an identifiable affinity for it. If asked about it, he tells the runners that he's never heard anything like this before. And he definitely wants to hear more.

Note that Shawn is not a Mozart-type prodigy. Someday, with the right inspiration and instruction, he might become a talented composer and performer. Right now, however, only the spark has been lit, providing another clue to the shadowrunners that no one has paid any real attention to Shawn at all.

SIX DAYS IN HIDING

The runners must watch over Shawn for about six days while the events around them play out. During this time, they will need to eat and probably get other supplies. Jack Drew can handle most of their needs, but do not keep the fixer around all the time, if for no other reason than to push some of the runners outside the safe house. They may already be going outside if they are doing legwork, but the players may need a reminder that their characters do not exist in a bubble. Have salesmen knock on the door; inflict wrong numbers or crank calls on them. Have people in the neighborhood act suspiciously (as the runners see it) and so on. Make them paranoid.

The player characters may be lying low, but life continues around them. Not only that, but one of the world's biggest and best private security corporations is looking for them. Don't let the runners forget that.

DEBUGGING

The worst thing that can happen in this encounter is the runners' failure to make an emotional connection with Shawn. He needs to become more than just a mission, more than a potential source of karma and money. Shawn's significance to the runners is extremely important to the success of this story. Without it, the runners face no dilemma in the concluding encounter, **Decision Time,** p. 38. Unless they really care what happens to Shawn, the decision they must make comes too easily.

DECISION TIME

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Drew enters the room, looking like a man unsure of his footing. With a slight, subtle gesture he calls you over, out of the kid's earshot. He does not look at you directly, and his unfocused gaze often flicks over toward Shawn. "It's over," he says finally, focusing on the words. "We're done."

You nod and look over at the boy. He's lost somewhere, paying little attention to the here and now. "Where do we take him?" you ask.

Drew shakes his head. "There are no instructions."

"*No instructions?*" You wonder if you heard right. Drew must be confused.

He shakes his head again. "No instructions. You've been paid in full, everything's taken care of. The remainder of the mission's off. I don't know what happened, so don't bother asking."

You stare at him. "What do we do with the boy?"

He looks away, shrugging. "There are no instructions."

HOOKS

The entire adventure comes together here. Corp X's gambit has failed—Anna called their bluff (she hopes). She has rebuffed their blackmail attempt in the hope they'll simply release Shawn. After all, what on earth would they do with an eight-year-old boy? They certainly wouldn't kill him (would they)?

If everything has gone as it should up to this point, the runners should have a few qualms about simply sending Shawn home to an environment that is obviously damaging him. But what else can they do?

That question has no simple answer. Try to avoid allowing all the possible choices to devolve into one. Let the players argue among themselves. Let the boy and the situation they have helped create weigh on them. But do not give them an easy out unless it becomes obvious that the players are stalemated. At that point, steer them in one direction or another, but let them make the final choice.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Initially, the runners do not know what happened, but they can do legwork to find out (see **Legwork,** p. 40), or perhaps even contact Audrey W. to see what she knows. The latter occurs at the gamemaster's discretion; it should depend on how this finale is playing out. The runners know only that they've been told to cut Shawn loose, with no other instructions. Presumably they are to send him home to his mother, but should the runners do that? Do they have a choice? Do they want to make that choice?

From here, the runners can go in a number of directions, none of which offer a simple, clear-cut solution. The choices available are all shades of gray, some darker than others. Shawn cannot help them make a conclusive, convincing decision because he doesn't know where he wants to go. He's simply too confused to decide.

SENDING HIM HOME TO MOTHER

Obviously, the easy solution is to send Shawn back to his mother. The question is, should the runners do that? Do they have any right *not* to?

The act of sending Shawn home is simple—the runners can just call a cab or drop him off near the condo. Shawn, confused by everything, offers little or no resistance. He has a sad, vacant look in his eyes during the proceedings. Sometimes he seems about to ask a serious question, but he never manages to get it out.

If he goes home, things get better and worse for a while. His mother pays more attention to him for a time, until the demands of her job and her psyche push her back into old habits. Dr. Singtree may be able to use the disruption of Shawn's life to convince Anna to do something about her son, or maybe not. Of course, Shawn also becomes the center of unwanted attention from Knight Errant. The security boys want to know who grabbed him, though Shawn probably doesn't know anything useful. He also receives intrusive attention from Audrey W., who, after digging up her own information on his background and family, is somewhat dismayed at his return to that environment. Unfortunately, Audrey cannot come up with a viable alternative.

SENDING HIM OFF TO DAD

A definite long shot, this choice requires significant improvisation from the gamemaster regarding communication and responses to and from Colin Gaffney. Colin, though he tells himself he loves his son, doesn't know what to do with him. If the runners put sufficient pressure on Colin (perhaps from Audrey W.'s broadcasts), he might agree to take the boy in (once again, at the gamemaster's discretion). But the runners can't tell whether anything will be different for Shawn at Dassurn Securities and Investments with his father than it was with Anna at Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services. Given the fact that Colin Gaffney walked away from his son without a backward glance, what kind of hope for a normal family life does Shawn have with his father?

HELP FROM AUDREY W.

Some players might figure that Audrey W. is part of the adventure for the purpose of providing a home for Shawn at the end of the story. Not true (but go ahead and let them think so). She feels for the boy because he reminds her of her own neglected childhood, but she cannot possibly take care of him. She knows she cannot pay any more attention to him than either of his natural parents. Like Anna, Audrey is just too involved in her work. She finds that realization tough to deal with, but she is unable to change at the present time.

If prodded, however (at the gamemaster's discretion), Audrey might use her contacts to find Shawn a good home: in the care of some childless friends, or at some artistic commune hidden away deep in NAN lands (a good solution if his musical inclination surfaces). Once again, there's no way to tell if Shawn will prosper in any of those places, but they represent another option to investigate.

A HOME WITH A FRIEND

The contacts and other people with whom the runners have dealt over the years might include someone who could take Shawn in. For example, they might convince Marti, leader of the Shoalwater Elven Community described in the **Shadowrun** adventure **Ivy and Chrome,** to take Shawn in for a time. As with every other option, the likelihood of a friend of the runners taking Shawn is up to the gamemaster.

LIFE WITH A RUNNER

It might well occur to one of the players that his or her character could take responsibility for Shawn, especially if the gamemaster or the adventure pushes the right buttons. Of course, this decision would open up an entirely different can of worms, a squirming mass of issues that cannot be addressed within the scope of this product. Hopefully, the runner in question isn't foolish enough to think he or she can help Shawn singlehandedly. The boy needs a stable environment and professional help. Being taken in by a shadowrunner doesn't seem like the ideal solution—but again, who's to say?

OPTIONS FROM OUT OF LEFT FIELD

Some player groups may need a more obvious choice than those described above. That's fine; everyone plays role-playing games for different reasons. If such a solution is necessary, consider the following options.

If necessary, let the runners succeed in convincing Audrey W. to take Shawn. If the situation is set up properly and Audrey is made aware of the depth of Shawn's emotional mess, she might agree to take him in if the runners are sufficiently persuasive. She would find it particularly difficult to make him a part of her life in any inconspicuous way, considering that she plastered Shawn's face on the trid for all the world to see, but she might manage it. The public has a short memory, and within a few weeks some other cause will have risen to push Shawn Gaffney into media oblivion. Implementing this solution, however, probably requires Audrey W. to play a greater and more direct role with the runners earlier in the adventure. Try letting her succeed in tracking down the runners, or have them capture her and place her with Shawn; either way, the final set-up will be easier.

Alternatively, the gamemaster might create a relative of Colin Gaffney or Anna, perhaps a brother or sister estranged from the family, who might take Shawn in. This relative could be anybody doing almost anything, but for the solution to work they should probably live in some remote part of civilization where pursuit or recognition of Shawn is unlikely. A commune, tribal enclave, scientific outpost, and so on are all likely possibilities. Gamemasters who choose this avenue might want to prepare it ahead of time so that information about the relative comes up either in Audrey W.'s reports or through the runners' own legwork. The relative's appearance should seem like an organic part of the story, rather than a solution dropped into the players' laps at the very end.

DEBUGGING

The biggest problem that might crop up in this finale is the simple fact that it isn't a slam-bang, big-explosion ending. The players are probably thinking ahead and expecting some midnight border-crossing exchange, with corporate forces swooping in on para-gliders and such, but it ain't gonna happen. This run ends quietly, with an unexpected twist and a bit of a dilemma. The key is to structure the adventure so that the problem of what to do with Shawn is at the heart of it, rather than focusing on the trappings around him. The adventure's resolution should come from dealing with Shawn's plight and maybe finding some hope for him. Keep in mind that there is no easy solution; no spell can be cast to make him better, no button can be pressed to make everything all right.

One way or another, **Divided Assets** will probably end with Shawn walking away from the runners unsure of what is happening or what will become of him. Hopefully, the runners will feel confident that they made a good decision.

Hopefully.

PICKING UP THE PIECES

See **Decision Time,** p. 38, for the possible conclusions of this adventure. Though Corp X has pulled the plug on the mission, the runners get paid in full per their contract and their trip home occurs without incident (unless the gamemaster chooses differently).

AWARDING KARMA

Divided Assets is a difficult adventure for which to award Karma because no single clear-cut conclusion or proper decision can be made at the end. The gamemaster should adjust the Karma Award as he sees fit, based on the player characters' performance and their handling of the adventure's moral dilemma.

TEAM KARMA

Completing the adventure	10 points
Grabbing Shawn with a minimum of fuss and violence	2 points
Thinking ahead and avoiding Knight Errant's ritual magic	4 points

INDIVIDUAL KARMA

Award Individual Karma per the rules on p. 199, **SR II.**

LEGWORK

To follow up on or discover clues in this adventure, the player characters need to investigate people, places, and situations. One of the best ways for runners to get the information they need is through their contacts. This section provides success tables containing information available to the runners from their sources.

Generally, players make Success Tests using Street or Corporate Etiquette, Target Number 4, to find out what a contact knows. The amount of information available from the contact depends on the number of successes the player achieves on the test. Characters who achieve more than one success gain all the information available to all previous levels of success.

Try to make the player character's interaction with his contact consist of more than a few abstract dice rolls. Play out the meeting in full: contacts are characters with their own lives, points of view, and needs, not simply spigots of information to be turned on and off automatically.

After a player character has made his Etiquette Test and the number of successes has been determined, the gamemaster can roleplay the encounter with the appropriate information level in mind. Meetings should be tailored to the "personality" of specific contacts. Some prefer straightforward meets in specific places, while others only feel comfortable with elaborate procedures of information exchange.

Contacts are generally considered trustworthy, as long as the runners play it safe. A player character should never compromise his contact by later tipping others to his source, or by revealing that the team may be planning to hit some group with which the contact has connections. The contact's loyalty to the group may be stronger than his loyalty to the runner, and so a good runner never tests those ties by placing his contact in a position where he must choose.

The questions of whether or not the runner must pay for his contact's services, how much, and how soon the contact may want information or a favor in return, add another dimension to these encounters. Dealing with a contact is a two-way street. Those gamemasters who need a base-line value to determine fees for information can use the following formula. Multiply the contact's Skill Rating in his or her most appropriate Etiquette Skill by the number of successes the player rolled in his Etiquette Test. Multiply that total by the sum of the contact's Charisma and Intelligence. Then multiply that final value by 10. The result is in nuyen. Adjust the base result to reflect the actual contact involved. Normal Negotiation procedures apply when determining the final payment for the information.

Runners may also ask their contacts to "check around" or "keep their ear to the ground"—generally listen for news. In such cases, make an appropriate Etiquette Test for the contact, adding a +2 modifier to the target number provided in the information table. If the Etiquette Test results in any successes, the contact reports the appropriate information to the runner in 2D6 hours, or at a time determined by the gamemaster. This is an excellent way to ensure that runners learn a certain piece of information. The cost of this service is determined as if the contact initially had access to the information (see above formula).

Add complexity to legwork by acknowledging that contacts are not always available at the convenience of the runners. Arrangements must be made before actual meetings can take place. When a player character wants to meet with a contact, roll 2D6, then multiply the result by 30. The resulting base time is the number of minutes it takes to arrange a meeting with the contact. Players may elect to trade off successes from their Etiquette Test to reduce the time it takes to reach the contact, and so receive faster, but potentially less helpful, information. In this case, have the player make the Etiquette Test at the time he announces his intention to meet with the contact. The player also decides at that time how many successes he will trade off to reduce the waiting period. The base time value should be kept secret.

ELECTRONIC LEGWORK

Deckers may also take an active role in acquiring general information. Many electronic information services exist in the era of **Shadowrun**—public, private, and secret—and these contain gigapulses of data comprised of on-line conversations, rumors, stolen and dumped files, and the like. Deckers can create simple programs to search vast databases for key words and related terms, then download the information to their cyberdecks or Matrix-connected personal computers. Assume all deckers have such programs.

Virtually any information available in this section can be found in the Matrix, if one knows where to look and has the time. The base time for such a search is 2D6 hours. The decker makes a Success Test against his or her Etiquette (Matrix) Skill, or defaults to Intelligence on the Skill Web. The target number is the same as given on the information table. Players may not use Hacking Pool dice to supplement this Success Test roll. Etiquette Test successes can be traded off to reduce the base time for receiving information. Appropriate Contact restrictions do not apply to obtaining information through the Matrix, though the player must indicate what kind of information sources he is searching. If the character is searching corporate-related databases, Corporate Contact information is appropriate. If the character is searching a street-level chat-line database, Street Contact information is appropriate.

A decker is limited in the number of subjects he can research simultaneously, based on his own abilities and the available time. The maximum number of searches that the decker can conduct at any one time is equal to half the character's Intelligence, divided by 2, rounded up. This base value assumes the decker does nothing else but sit and search, continually adjusting the search paths and parameters. If the character wishes to actively perform other activities, the gamemaster must decide how much time is taken up performing those other activities and adjust the base value accordingly.

SHADOWLAND

The Shadowland network is a particularly wide-ranging and valuable source of information in the Matrix. The decker may only use Shadowland for one request during the course of the adventure, in addition to his other search programs. If the decker wishes to use Shadowland, he must first find a local echo station. To do this, he must make a successful Etiquette (Matrix) (4) Test. Once the decker has found the echo station, he may post a request for information. The decker must tell the gamemaster if he wants general information quickly or more complete data after a longer period of time. This preference should be expressed as a ratio: 1 success allocated to accuracy for every 2 to speed, or vice versa.

The gamemaster then rolls 8 dice against the appropriate target number (listed for each category of information). The gamemaster then determines how much information the decker gained in how much time. The base time for a search in Shadowland is 36 hours, unless otherwise noted after the target number on the **Shadowland** line in each entry. To determine how long the search takes, divide the base time by the number of successes allocated to speed. The quotient represents the actual search time. The successes allocated to accuracy determine the information actually learned (consult the Success Tables as normal).

After the necessary time has passed, the requested information is posted on the Shadowland network. The team decker, however, has no way of knowing precisely when the information will turn up. Deckers posting requests on Shadowland should check for their information every so often after the minimum time has elapsed. Once it shows up, use the successes allocated to accuracy to tell the decker how much information is on the network for him.

LEGWORK IN DENVER

In **Divided Assets,** the runners may look for information in one of two places—their home turf or Denver. On their home turf, the runners can reach their contacts easily and so normal rules apply. If they are in Denver (unless Denver *is* their home turf), the following guidelines come into play.

The runners can still use their usual contacts, but must get in touch with them by telecom (unless the nature of the contact allows for other methods). Apply +2 modifiers to the target numbers for any Etiquette Tests made to reach contacts in this manner. Also, most contacts outside Denver cannot obtain Denver information, such as the lowdown about the Brandis Development and so on. Gamemasters must use their discretion to determine what a specific out-of-town contact may know or be able to obtain. At the gamemaster's discretion, the home-turf contact may have contacts of his own who can get the requested information; if so, the player character's contact makes the Etiquette Test to get the information from his contact. Calculate fees and time per standard rules, adding 10 percent to the base value for each to account for delays and service fees.

A runner may also keep his own ear to the pavement (watching out for oncoming traffic, of course). For player characters choosing this option, double all target numbers, increase the base time for legwork by 50 percent and increase the fee (bribes, palm grease, tips, and so on) by 50 percent as well. It's tough to find good data in a town you don't know.

Because Denver is home to the Nexus, electronic information can be somewhat easier to get, but only if the decker has the right connections. The base time to make such connections is 18 hours, the target number for the appropriate Etiquette (Matrix) Test is 10, and the player must roll Etiquette (Matrix) dice or default to Intelligence on the Skill Web. Apply appropriate modifiers if the decker has good connections, a past history with noted Matrix veterans, or is something of a "name" among deckers. This test determines the level of access the decker gets to the Nexus itself, with the practical benefit that every 2 successes reduces all Shadowland target numbers by 1. If the decker achieves any successes at all on this Etiquette (Matrix) Test, the normal rules for Shadowland do not apply. Instead, the decker can find any information he or she wants regardless of its nature, and the base time for all searches drops to 1D6 hours.

PEOPLE

The player characters can discover the following information about the people in this adventure through public datanets, Chicago contacts, and Denver contacts.

SHAWN GAFFNEY

Public Information: None

Chicago Information

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 8)
Any Chicago Corporate Contact.
For other Corporate Contacts, Target Number 12.
Shadowland: Target Number 6

Successes	Results
0	"Whah? Who? He play for the Cubs?"
1	"Name rings a bell ... Doesn't some hotshot numbers wizard named Gaffney work for Fuchs-Auberlien Financial?"
2–3	"Oh, that's the family where the father jumped ship rather publicly a few months ago, yes?"
4+	"Gaffney? That's the kid left dangling from the building, right? Hope he's okay—something like that could damage a kid forever."

Denver Information

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Denver Corporate Contact.
For other Corporate Contacts, Target Number 12.
Shadowland: Target Number 4

Successes	Results
0	"Whah? Who? He play for the Rockies?"
1	"Gaffney, isn't that what's-her-name Coleridge's corp-jumper husband? She's at Fuchs-Auberlien Financial still, but I have no idea where he is."
2–3	"I remember the buzz when his mom got transferred out here. Don't know much about the kid, but I hear she's a real cold fish."
4+	"Met him once at one of those uncomfortable Fuchs-Auberlien Financial picnics. Nice kid—fraggin' quiet, though. Somebody said his father's jumping corps messed him up. I couldn't say—he seemed okay to me."

COLIN GAFFNEY

Public Information: News broadcast (**See it Now,** p. 7) and in the **Player Handout,** p. 58.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Corporate Contact.
Shadowland: Target Number 4

Successes	Results
0	"I am unfamiliar with the gentleman. Should I know him?"
1	"Wasn't he the corper who defected by jumping out of a building a few months ago?"
2–3	"Of course I know Colin Gaffney. Brilliant economic theoretician. Questionable human being."
4+	"I hear he ended up at Dassurn Securities and Investments, where they treat him like a god. Go figure."

ANNA COLERIDGE-GAFFNEY

Public Information: None beyond the information in the news broadcast (**See It Now,** p. 7) and in the **Player Handout,** p. 58.

Chicago Information

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Chicago Corporate Contact.
For other Corporate Contacts, Target Number 12.
Shadowland: Target Number 4

Successes	Results
0	"Any relation to the poet? No? Pity."
1	"She's some kind of analyst for Fuchs-Auberlien Financial, right?"
2–3	"I've met her. Anna and her husband ran rival resource groups at the corporation for awhile, until he skipped."
4+	"Tireless worker, diligent spirit. I hear the real reason her husband took off was to get away from her."

Denver Information

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Denver Corporate Contact.
For other Corporate Contacts, Target Number 12.
Shadowland: Target Number 4

Successes	Results
0	"I think I had a math teacher named Coleridge-Gaffney."
1	"Thought I saw her name mentioned on some corp register. New in town? Just transferred in from Chicago? Yup, that's her."
2–3	"When she moved into Denver, she took over for one of Fuchs-Auberlien Financial's less-than-well-liked researchers. Now everybody in that department wants the old guy back."
4+	"She's been fast-tracked for a management/analysis position. The corp figures she'll be even more loyal with her husband gone 'cause she's got more to prove."

AUDREY W.

The runners can find general information on Audrey, as well as information on why Shawn Gaffney's story interests her so much.

Public Information: Audrey W. is an internationally known cybersnoop and newsmagazine reporter. Her top-rated trid-mag, **The All-Seeing Eye**, has an "on-demand" broadcast slot, meaning that she gets a slot whenever she wants to do a show. Little is known about her private life; most people assume she doesn't have one.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Media Contact.
Shadowland: Target Number 4

Successes	Results
0	"What?! No last name?! Next thing ya know, people just use symbols instead of names... ."
1	"Sure, the cybersnoop. I always catch her show. Very credible. Think she's a real blond?"
2–3	"Very intense young lady, very cause-oriented. When she gets a crusade into her head, you'd better hope you're not the infidel."
4+	"Top-ace cybersnoop. Maybe the best. But I'll tell you, she can't hold a casual conversation to save her life. She doesn't know how. Didn't her parents teach her anything?"

When the runners realize Audrey is coming after them, they might ask why she is taking Shawn's story so much to heart. If they do, they can learn the following information.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 8)
Any Media Contact.
Shadowland: Target Number 6

Successes	Results
0	"Hey, got a match?"
1	"A story's a story, chummer. It's what she does."
2–3	"I've seen her take a couple of stories really personally. When that happens, she turns up the intensity a couple of notches from blazing to white-hot."
4+	"You know she comes from a rich family? She says she didn't realize who her parents were until she was about ten and she introduced herself. She told me that little anecdote when I asked her about the Shawn Gaffney story. Now I'm telling you."

DR. MARTIN SINGTREE

Public Information: Dr. Martin Singtree is registered as a psychotherapist licensed to practice in the United Canadian and American States. A check with the appropriate professional organizations reveals a below-average number of complaints and malpractice suits. He is not, however, listed in the *UCAS Who's Who of Psychotherapists.*

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Medical Contact.
Shadowland: Target Number 6

Successes	Results
0	"Heh. Let me guess. Injun, right? Har, har."
1	"I have heard of Dr. Singtree. Very respected in his field."
2–3	"Quite a charismatic little fellow—and I mean 'little' in terms of height, not breadth. He lives quite well for someone with the mid-level practice he seems to have."
4+	"Marty's got quite a scene going for himself. Don't tell anyone I told you this, but he does a lucrative side business in corporate employees who need help or therapy and don't want Big Brother Corp knowing about it."

JACK DREW

Public Information: None.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Corporate Contact, Fixer, Johnson, or Street Contact.
Shadowland: Target Number 4

Successes	Results
0	"Lemme guess—Nancy's dad? Brother? Cross-gender clone?"
1–2	"A fixer and a Johnson, ain't he? Big black guy—saw him kill someone with a swizzle stick once. I mean, the guy he killed had one, not that Jack killed him with one... ."
3+	"Straight shooter. Resourceful and very loyal to his employer. Very loyal."

PETER TOMITA

Public Information: None

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Bodyguard, Corporate Contact, Fixer, Johnson, or Street Contact.
Shadowland: Target Number 4

Successes	Results
0	"Not a clue. You want me to make something up?"
1–2	"Personal bodyguard, hard hitter but very professional. Not the type who blindly sprays a crowd with submachine gun fire."
3+	"Drives like a son-of-a-bat. I hear he used to be a pro driver, at least on the virtual circuit, or something like that."

KELLIE ROSS

Public Information: None

Appropriate Contacts
None
Shadowland: Target Number 8

Successes	Results
0	"Never heard of her."
1–2	"She's a freelance companion/nanny/governess working in the Front Range Free Zone. Don't know who she's working for now."
3+	"She works as weekend adult companion for Shawn Gaffney, Anna Coleridge-Gaffney's son. Anna's with Fuchs-Auberlien Financial."

EVENTS

The player characters can learn about the following events in this adventure.

COLIN GAFFNEY'S EXTRACTION

Information concerning Colin Gaffney's extraction changes after Shawn's kidnapping. Once the runners grab the kid, different information about Shawn's father becomes available as more people are willing to talk about the original event. The information available before the kidnapping appears first below, followed by that available after the kidnapping.

Public Information: Known public information appears in **See It Now,** p. 7, and in the **Player Handout,** p. 58.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Fixer, Johnson, or Corporate Contact.
Shadowland: Target Number 4

Successes	Results
0	"Sorry chummer, the only extractions I know about involve molars."
1	"Drek! Wasn't that all over the news-trids? You must have seen it—terrible thing, but pretty daring. Who'd have thought of taking one person out of a building like that in broad daylight, let alone two."
2–3	"Lord, how him skipping out like that and trying to take the kid must have made his wife wild. I'd hate to have been in that kid's shoes afterward."
4+	"Pretty weird situation, if you ask me. I watched the news-trid tape a bunch of times when it aired, trying to figure out what bugged me about it, but I never could. Oh, well."

Public Information: Depending on the timing, some of the following information may have been made public by Audrey W.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6)
Any Corporate Contact, Fixer or Johnson.
Shadowland: Target Number 6

Successes	Results
0	"Sorry, chummer. The only extractions I know about involve wisdom teeth."
1	"Ballsy move. Not the best-planned run from the looks of how it went down, though."
2–3	"Did ya see how they botched grabbing the kid? The second shadowrunner had no extra harness like the first one did. How the frag did they think they were going to get that kid down? Carry him?"
4+	"I figured out what bothered me about that run. If you look closely at the news-trid, that second shadowrunner looks fraggin' surprised to have that kid hanging off him. I don't think they ever planned to take the kid with them."

CORPORATIONS

The player characters can learn the following information in Denver and elsewhere about corporations involved in this adventure.

FUCHS-AUBERLIEN FINANCIAL SERVICES

Public Information

Home Office/Location: Cheyenne, Sioux Nation
President/CEO: Miriam Fox-Wallow
Chief Products/Services: Multi-faceted financial analysis and development services
Business Profile: Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services (FAFS) is primarily a consultancy house specializing in advising wealthy private individuals and corporations on long-term, multi-track economic strategies in a variety of financial forums.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 6 in Denver, 8 elsewhere)
Any Corporate Contact.
Shadowland: Target Number 4 in Denver, 6 elsewhere.

Successes	Results
0	"I have no idea. Try the guy in the next booth."
1–2	"You know, I hate companies like Fuchs Auberlien. They don't do anything except figure out what *might* happen *if* something else *maybe* happened. Lots of prognosticating, very little exposure or culpability."
3+	"Pretty hotshot company. They specialize in leading mid-sized corporations through the nasty shark tank of multinational, megacorporate status. For a cut, of course."

DASSURN SECURITIES AND INVESTMENTS

Public Information

Home Office/Location: Seattle, UCAS
President/CEO: Elliot Winright
Chief Products/Services: International banking and finance corporation
Business Profile: Dassurn Securities and Investment (DSI) specializes in multi-market investments and practices for a wide variety of private and corporate clients.

Appropriate Contacts (Target Number 8)
Any Corporate Contact.
Shadowland: Target Number 6

Successes	Results
0	"I'll bet they handle money, right?"
1–2	"You know, I hate companies like those guys. They don't do anything except figure out what *might* happen *if* something else *maybe* happened. Lots of prognosticating, very little exposure or culpability."
3+	"They're an international banking concern, as well as a financial market investment and analysis firm. I keep hearing they're on Saeder-Krupp's acquisition list, but there doesn't seem to be any activity."

CAST OF SHADOWS

The following NPCs play principal roles in **Divided Assets.** Because they appear more than once in the course of the adventure, their statistics and descriptions are grouped here for convenience. The characters are presented in order of general importance to the story. Descriptions and statistics used in this adventure for other, minor NPCs appear in this section under **Average People.** Note that the NPCs in **Divided Assets** use the variant Threat Rating system presented in the **Prime Runners** sourcebook. A description of this system is reprinted below for convenience.

THREAT RATINGS

Shadowrun, Second Edition, introduced the concept of Threat Ratings to simplify the control and maintenance of non-player characters (NPCs). Since then, we at FASA have received a great deal of feedback and many suggestions regarding the care and handling of NPCs. These suggestions inspired the following expansion of the Threat Rating system. As always, feel free to use whatever systems work best for your individual campaigns.

The basic Threat Rating system gives the gamemaster a constant number of dice to use for any offensive or defensive tests an NPC makes. The Threat Rating replaces Dice Pools, freeing the gamemaster from having to keep track of how many pool dice NPCs have used during combat. The Threat Rating system also allows the gamemaster to quickly strengthen an NPC—even archetypes or contacts—simply by increasing the NPC's Threat Rating. The Threat Rating can even be modified "on the fly"—while a game is running or even in the middle of combat. This flexibility enables **Shadowrun** gamemasters to instantaneously adjust the NPC opponents their player characters are facing to maintain game balance. Say the player characters are walking all over the corporate hit team that was supposed to give them the fight of their lives. No problem—simply increase the Threat Ratings of the NPCs that make up the hit team. If the player characters are taking a beating at the hands of rank amateurs intended only as a quick diversion, it is just as easy to subtract a few dice from the Threat Rating.

Gamemasters interested in working with a more complex system that better represents the specific capabilities of NPCs may use the following expansion of the basic Threat Rating system. This expanded version includes general guidelines for using the Threat Rating system to balance the strength and capabilities of NPC opponents to that of player character groups.

DEGREE OF THREAT

Shadowrun non-player characters excel at different things. Some possess exceptional skills in combat, while others excel in magic, decking, controlling a vehicle, and so on. To better reflect these diverse areas of expertise, an NPC may be assigned a Threat Rating for each area for which he would normally have a Dice Pool. In this multiple Threat Rating system, NPCs may be assigned separate Threat Ratings for their Combat, Magical, Decking, and Vehicle (Control) threats.

The basic value for each of these Threat Ratings is equal to one-third (round to the nearest whole number) of whatever the Dice Pool would have been for that character. Add the Threat Rating dice to all appropriate tests for that area (i.e., Combat, Magic, and so on).

To use Threat Ratings to balance the strength of an NPC or NPC group and the player character(s) they oppose, the gamemaster may calculate effective Threat Ratings for NPCs. Effective Threat Ratings provide an initial basis for comparison between the opponents, allowing the gamemaster to determine, in general terms, how balanced any given encounter is likely to be when the two factions meet. However, Threat Ratings alone do not provide an exact measure of the threat presented by NPCs. Keep in mind that a number of other variables—the NPCs' weapons, equipment, spells, cyberware, bioware, and the like—also contribute to the groups' level of danger.

Combat Threat Rating

The Combat Threat Rating represents an NPC's expertise in ranged, armed and unarmed combat.

When calculating the effective Combat Threat Rating, gamemasters may wish to include the effect of the NPC's Initiative on the rating. To use Initiative as a factor, calculate the average number of actions the NPC has in a Combat Turn. Increase the NPC's effective Combat Threat Rating by 50 percent for 2 actions, by 100 percent for 3 actions, and by 150 percent for 4 actions. Player characters' Combat Pool ratings can be adjusted in the same way for purposes of making this comparison.

Remember that an imbalance of firepower can shift a fight in favor of under-skilled opposition or vice versa. The same holds true if one of the groups has melee weapons, especially those with Reach ratings, and the other side does not.

Magical Threat Rating

The Magical Threat Rating is used in the same situations as Magic Pool dice.

The gamemaster may allocate Magical Threat dice to spell defense at a ratio of 2 points of spell defense per 1 point (die) of Magical Threat. As long as these dice are allocated to spell defense, they may not be used for other magical Success Tests.

For purposes of comparing the opponents, gamemasters may also add one-half of an initiate's grade to the NPC's effective Magical Threat Rating. Note that only spellcasting magicians have a Magical Threat. Conjuring adepts do not have Magical Threat Ratings, though the gamemaster may use an effective rating equal to one-third (round to the nearest whole number) of the NPC's Conjuring Skill. For optimum game balance, however, the effect of any accompanying or conjured spirits should really be applied across the entire battle rather than in favor of a single character.

A character's spells, foci, spirits and the like can easily shift the balance between magic-wielding opponents. Therefore, gamemasters may wish to estimate the effective Magical Threat Ratings before beginning play and be prepared to rebalance them "on the fly" if necessary.

Decking Threat Rating

The Decking Threat Rating is used in the same situations as Hacking Pool dice.

When estimating the strength of opposing deckers, note that the character's cyberdecks and/or programs can shift the balance of strength radically. Also, corporate deckers fighting in a home system have an advantage automatically because they can ignore security codes and other obstacles.

Vehicle (Control) Threat Rating

The Vehicle (Control) Threat Rating functions like Control Pool dice. It applies to tests relating to vehicle control, such as Driving, Piloting, and Position Tests.

When balancing opponents in a control "fight" (such as a chase), note that the Handling characteristics of the vehicles involved can greatly affect the outcome.

IS THAT TOUGH ENOUGH?

Gamemasters can determine the level of challenge an NPC opponent group represents for a group of player characters by comparing the combined Threat Rating of the NPC opponent group, multiplied by 3, to the combined Dice Pool points of the player character group. For example, a group of player characters with a combined Combat Pool of 36 points will find a fight with an NPC group possessing a Combat Threat Rating of 12 (33 percent of the Combat Pool total), to be A Breeze. The following Fight Level Table describes six levels of challenge calculated using this principle. The Threat Level in the table provides a quick description of the challenge the player characters face. The Threat Rating/Dice Pool Percentage provides the Threat Rating as a percentage of the combined Dice Pool (as described in the example above).

Certain Threat Ratings are only relevant in certain situations. For example, an NPC's Decking Threat Rating only becomes important when an encounter involves decking. And the Vehicle Threat only becomes important in chases and other situations where the Control Pool applies. In the most common fights—street actions and such—Combat and Magical Threat Ratings are most important.

As mentioned before, equipment and resources easily can tip the balance of a fight. For example, an NPC group with relatively low Combat Threats will do better in a fight if their weaponry outclasses the player-characters' arsenal. Grenades and other independent area-effect attacks like missiles can quickly shift a fight in the favor of an under-skilled attacker. Vehicles, spells and spirits, decks and other peripheral advantages can also affect the balance of fights considerably.

Unfortunately, any attempt to quantify these factors quickly turns into a mathematical orgy, and so we recommend that gamemasters use their own discretion to appraise the likely effects of various gear, weaponry, vehicles and the like when balancing an encounter.

Final Note

Most non-player character profiles presented in **Prime Runners** include specific Threat Ratings. These represent guidelines—gamemasters should always feel free to modify any Threat Ratings published for **Shadowrun** NPCs or set their own ratings, because the level of danger an NPC presents is always relative to the strength of the player characters. For example, a decker NPC may have a fairly high Decking Threat Rating in her profile, but if your player character group includes a drekhot decker, that NPC may not present much competition unless the NPC's Decking Threat Rating is increased.

FIGHT LEVEL TABLE

Threat Level	Threat Rating/ Dice Pool Percentage	Description
A Breeze	33%	The proverbial cakewalk. Barely a scratch on the runners.
Tricky	75%	Not so simple, but not really a concern. A lucky shot might do some damage.
Even Up	100%	The two sides are evenly matched. All things being equal, the fight could go either way.
Hard	125%	The runners are going to have to work to pull this one off. The opposition is tougher than they are, but not unbeatable.
A Bruiser	150%	When this one's over, the runners will know they've been through a fight. Everyone ends up hurting after this one.
We're Screwed	200%	The runners need to be *real* smart or *real* lucky to avoid ending up *real* dead.

CREATURE/SPIRIT THREAT RATINGS

Creatures and spirits have Threat Ratings as well. These are the equivalent of Combat Threat Ratings and are equal to one-half (round all fractions up) of a creature's Reaction or a spirit's Force. For creatures with paranormal or spellcasting abilities (specifically dragons), increase these ratings by one-half the creature's Essence if the critter possesses a combat, damaging, or neutralizing spell or ability. Do not apply this increase to spirits' Threat Ratings.

SHAWN GAFFNEY

Shawn is a troubled child. For years he's been a "burden" to his too-busy, self-absorbed parents, and he has no real friends within his isolated corporate world. Smart enough to grow bored easily, he does not apply himself at school, and the events surrounding his father's extraction from Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services traumatized him. Because such stresses rarely manifest themselves seriously until adolescence, Shawn shows little outward sign of his problems unless someone pushes the right buttons. Signs exist, however, for those perceptive enough to see them. (At the moment, Shawn is lucky that his therapist, Martin Singtree, is paying attention to him. Unfortunately, Singtree's reports to Shawn's mother have done little except to broaden the gap between mother and son and may—unless other events intercede—prompt Anna Coleridge-Gaffney to remove Shawn from Singtree's care.)

Quiet by nature, Shawn says little (especially to strangers). If the runners can get him to open up and relax around them, they will pick up on his sly, understated sense of humor. Shawn is quite good at the dry put-down when he puts his mind to it. Bright and perceptive, he can put two and two together very quickly, and so the runners may have to watch what they say and do around him. Because of these characteristics, he often seems more mature than his eight years might suggest. Keep in mind that Shawn has all the naiveté, fears, hopes, and misconceptions of any boy that age and has grown up inside a corporate bubble that only one event ever pierced—his father's extraction.

Shawn has unresolved feelings about his father's departure. Part of him wants to be with his father, because the boy sees that departure as an escape from the prison he's in. Another part of him cares very little about his father's absence. He knows he's supposed to miss his Dad, but he doesn't always. His confusion about his father has led him to transfer some of his anger to his mother, whom he blames for his father's disappearance and his own continued confinement. At the same time, Shawn desperately seeks Anna's approval and reassurance that she will not "escape" too. In truth, Shawn no longer needs either of them, though he is not yet aware of this. He has existed for eight years with no physical, emotional, or social support from them, and he has learned enough self-sufficiency to deal with the vacuum their lack of attention has created. If, however, he cannot eventually fill that vacuum with real attention and emotion or express his loneliness and associated emotions through music, he will develop serious emotional and psychosocial problems. Removing Shawn from the influence of his parents will do him no more long-term damage than has already been done.

Shawn has a slight fear of heights that he must make a Willpower Test to overcome, or he freezes in place. The Target Number for such tests is 2 if he's looking out a window, 4 if he is out in the open. If he is more than 10 stories off the ground, increase the target number by +1. He may make this Willpower Test once every 30 seconds (about 8 Combat Turns), but the target number increases by +2 for each test.

Shawn also has an odd reaction to violence. If there is no evident bloodshed and everything happens like it does on the trid shows (except LOUDER), Shawn *acts* like he's part of something on the trideo, without any real concern for his own safety or well being. As long as they stay cinematic, he seems to actually enjoy displays of bravado and firepower. If the violence turns deadly and someone near to Shawn takes a Serious Physical wound or greater, however, he begins to shut down. To resist shutting down, he must make a Willpower Test, this time against a Target Number of 3 if the person takes a Moderate wound, 6 if they take a Serious wound, and 10 if they take a Deadly wound. Apply additional modifiers to the target number as appropriate if Shawn makes this Willpower Test in response to a particularly violent, horrifying, or deliberately brutal act (putting a gun to someone's head and pulling the trigger, for example); the modifiers can range from +1 to +4. If the test is unsuccessful, Shawn becomes catatonic for 2D6 minutes and thereafter behaves as if he has taken a Serious Stun wound until that "damage" heals in the time indicated per standard rules. Each time Shawn goes into this state, add another 1D6 to the number of minutes he remains catatonic.

Two of Shawn's skills—Computer and Music (General)—are marked with an asterisk to show his significant, untapped

potential in both areas *when they are used together.* Neither his parents nor his teachers have paid close enough attention to Shawn to see that connection. An astute shadowrunner may figure it out, or circumstances may occur that allow Shawn himself to make the connection.

Shawn carries a portable computer with him at all times, which he keeps in his omnipresent, bright-purple backpack. In the computer is a simple mathematics program that uses musical tones as part of its teaching method. If left alone, Shawn plays with the program for hours. He knows the math inside and out, but he keeps doing the drills nonetheless. He does not realize that his fondness for the program actually stems from his dormant talent for making music with computers.

Attributes
- Body: 2
- Quickness: 3
- Strength: 2
- Charisma: 4
- Intelligence: 5
- Willpower: 4
- Essence: 5.7
- Reaction: 4

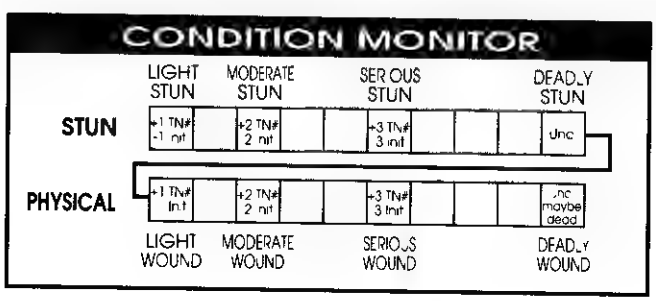
Initiative: 4 + 1D6
Threat/Professional Rating: 1/1

Skills
- Armed Combat: 1
- Athletics: 3
- Biology: 1
- Computer*: 2
- Etiquette (Corporate): 2
- Physical Sciences: 1
- Unarmed Combat: 1

Special Skills
- Bicycle: 4
- Music (General)*: 2

Cyberware
- Datajack
- Datasoft Link

Gear
- SynthaCanvas™ Backpack (bright purple)
- Basic Credstick (w/12-nuyen balance)
- Container of Smelly Glop™ (Do Not Eat!)
- DocWagon Contract (Gold) (w/emergency trigger/sealed-band wrist phone; see p. 43, **Neo-Anarchists' Guide to Real Life**)
- Normal Clothing
- Portable Computer w/50 Mp of memory
- Portable Music Chip Player (w/three "classical" chips)
- Portable Phone (Handset)
- School/Text Chips for portable computer (plus two slightly adult comic/multimedia chips)
- 1 NERP
- 1 Rubber Lizard named Sam



ANNA COLERIDGE-GAFFNEY

Anna Coleridge-Gaffney is a difficult woman to understand. She remains married to her absent husband Colin, but has begun the legal process to revert to her maiden name. Born to and raised by working-class parents just outside Boston, Anna put herself through Cambridge University and eventually the Milken Securities University in Manhattan by sheer willpower, working as many jobs as she could juggle with her classes. Always driven, Anna has continually sought to distance herself from her upbringing. In her own stories and recollections, she has moved the family home to Beacon Hill and transformed her parents into much more than they were.

She sees the corporation as a machine: a vast, complex mechanical organism that relies on all its parts operating quickly, cleanly, and in complete sync with each other. Though her work at Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services requires little interaction with the rest of the company, she drives home her beliefs about corporate function to her co-workers and subordinates. Difficult and demanding to work for, she is unforgiving and brutally honest. She has no room for luxuries or for anything else that does not advance her career. Unfortunately, that includes her son Shawn.

Anna met Colin Gaffney nine years ago at a mandatory corporate function and found (or so she thought) something of a kindred spirit. Both were ambitious, with long-term career goals that involved advancing high into the ranks of FAFS and staking claims to power. Both also knew that they could exploit FAFS' advancement and enrichment program, which encouraged intra-corporate marriages and families by offering pay, advancement, and stock-ownership incentives to employees who married. Through this program, FAFS intended to keep its employees by weaving entire families so tightly into the corporate structure and community that it would be disastrous for them to leave. Shawn was conceived by artificial insemination, and on many levels both of his parents simply considered him a corporate asset. They distanced themselves from him, pushing off his upbringing on a succession of guardians and companions. He was their son by blood, but no other ties bound them.

Anna is infuriated when Shawn is kidnapped. At first she believes her husband responsible despite his denials, until she receives the message from those who actually arranged Shawn's extraction. She does not know what to make of the corporate extortion but is oddly flattered by the corp's effort to woo her. She does not fear for Shawn's safety—he is too important a bargaining chip. The offer from Corporation X is very tempting, but FAFS presents Anna with an offer she cannot refuse (perhaps sensing the truth behind Shawn's disappearance). With no more than a twinge of concern that Corporation X might not release him, she refuses their offer.

Then she waits.

Attributes
- Body: 3
- Quickness: 2
- Strength: 2
- Charisma: 4
- Intelligence: 5
- Willpower: 4
- Essence: 2.6
- Reaction: 3

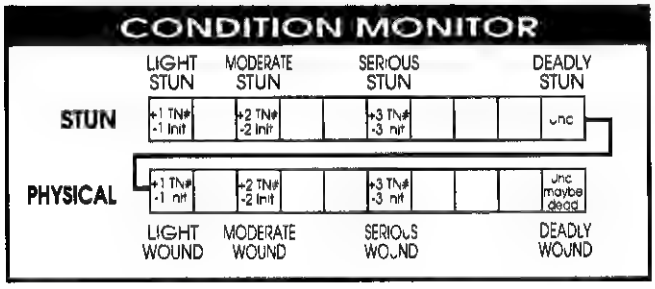
Initiative: 3 + 1D6
Threat/Professional Rating: 1/1

Skills
- Car: 3
- Computer: 5
- Etiquette (Corporate): 6
- Firearms: 1
- Interrogation (Verbal): 3
- Negotiation: 4
- Sailboat: 3

Special Skills
- Economics: 6
- Finance: 7

Cyberware
- Datajack
- Datasoft Link
- Display Link
- Headware Memory (300 Mp)

Gear
- Fichetti Security 500 [Light Pistol, SA, 6L, 1 (clip)]
- Pocket Secretary
- Pocket Telecom



PETER TOMITA

Peter Tomita is an internationally experienced, freelance personal bodyguard. A true professional, he resorts to violence only when necessary. The safety of his charge is paramount, more important than his own.

A San Francisco native of Japanese-American descent, Tomita is of below-average height and medium build with short, dark hair and green eyes. He is fond of fine arts and wears expensive European (mostly Spanish) suits especially tailored for him.

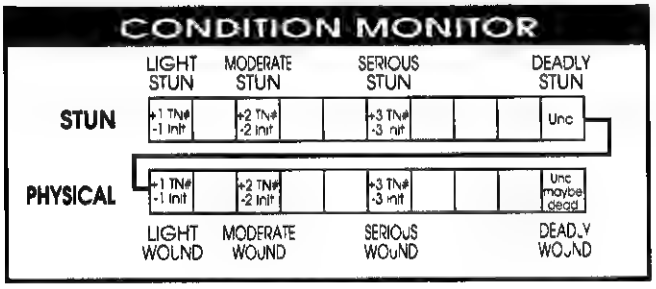
Attributes
- Body: 6 (9)
- Quickness: 6
- Strength: 5
- Charisma: 4
- Intelligence: 5
- Willpower: 5
- Essence: .4
- Reaction: 5 (9)

Initiative: 9 + 3D6
Threat/Professional Rating: 6/4

Skills
- Armed Combat: 6
- Car: 9
- Electronics: 4
- Etiquette (Corporate): 4
- Etiquette (High Society): 4
- Firearms: 8
- Negotiation: 5
- Stealth: 6
- Unarmed Combat: 8

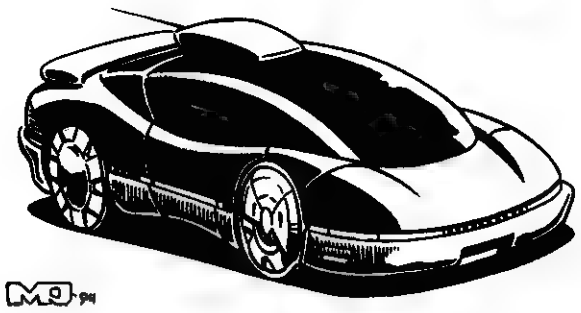
Cyberware (Beta-grade)
- Cybereyes w/Low-Light Vision and Flare Compensation
- Dermal Plating: 3
- Smartlink
- Vehicle Control Rig: 2
- Wired Reflexes: 2

Gear
- Armored Jacket (5/3)
- Concealed Holster
- DocWagon Contract (Gold)
- Eurocar Westwind 2000 (see below for statistics)
- Franchi SPAS-22 [Shotgun, SA/BF, 10S, 10 (m), 40 rounds regular ammo, 20 rounds gel ammo (8S Stun) Smartlink, 1 point recoil reduction, +2 Recoil Modifier]
- Pocket Secretary
- Portable Phone (Ear/boosted)
- Savelette Guardian [Heavy Pistol, SA/BF, 10M, 12 (c), 4 clips APDS ammo, 4 clips gel rounds (7M Stun), Smartlink]
- Tres Chic Clothing



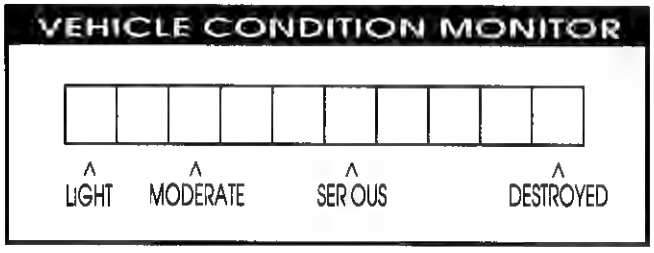
EUROCAR WESTWIND 2000

The latest from the Eurocar consortium of Porsche-Ferrari-BMW is available in targa, hardtop, and convertible models. The 2000 offers improved suspension, high performance and luxury, including full natural leather upholstery and the Advanced Passenger Protection System (APPS™) as standard equipment. The Gaffney family car is the special turbo-charged model for discerning buyers, and it also has additional engine modifications.



Handling	Speed	B/A	Sig	APilot
3/8	80/240	4/9	2	3

Seating: Twin front bucket seats, plus one small rear bench
Access: 2 front standard
Cargo: Small trunk (about .75 cubic meter)
Notes: Anti-theft system (Rating 5), APPS™ system, mobile PANICBUTTON™ system, mobile vidphone, runflat tires



AUDREY W.

Audrey W. remains as much of an enigma as she can manage to portray. The daughter of a wealthy Texas couple, Audrey (not her real name) fled their control at an early age and worked her way up on the streets of Houston as a reporter. She attached herself to a local hot-shot reporter named Wyatt Holliday and apprenticed herself at one time or another to all of Houston's broadcast or cable stations. She got her break a few years ago, when her series of reports on Texas-Aztlan BTL smuggling got picked up by an international trideo-distribution syndicate. Within months, she had become a regular on the "HotFlash!" trideo newsmagazine, which she left after a year to produce and host her own syndicated program, "The All-Seeing Eye."

Though she forces herself to remain cold and detached from the stories she reports, Audrey has learned that she can't ignore her own emotions when stories echo her personal past. She's aggressive, target-oriented, and personally uncompromising when it comes to finding out the truth. She is also something of an idealist about truth and justice, and she works hard to support her beliefs.

Tall, attractive, and distinctive-looking, Audrey has long, blond hair and pale blue eyes. She dresses for action, always in the latest rough-and-tumble fashion. The only piece of non-chic clothing she allows herself is a black T-shirt emblazoned with white letters that say, "Because I'm The Bitch, That's Why." She often wears it to meetings with network honchos.

Attributes
Body: 5
Quickness: 6
Strength: 4
Charisma: 6
Intelligence: 4
Willpower: 5
Essence: .15
Reaction: 5 (6)

Initiative: 5 (6) + 2D6
Threat/Professional Rating: 4/4

Skills
Driving: 2
Electronics (B/R): 1
Video (B/R): 3
Etiquette (Corporate): 7
Etiquette (Media): 4
Etiquette (Street): 5
Firearms: 4
Interrogation: 2
Video Interview: 6
Leadership: 1
Video Reporting: 5

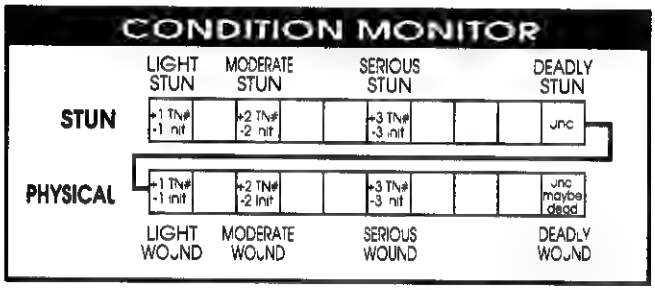
Special Skills
Portacam: 5

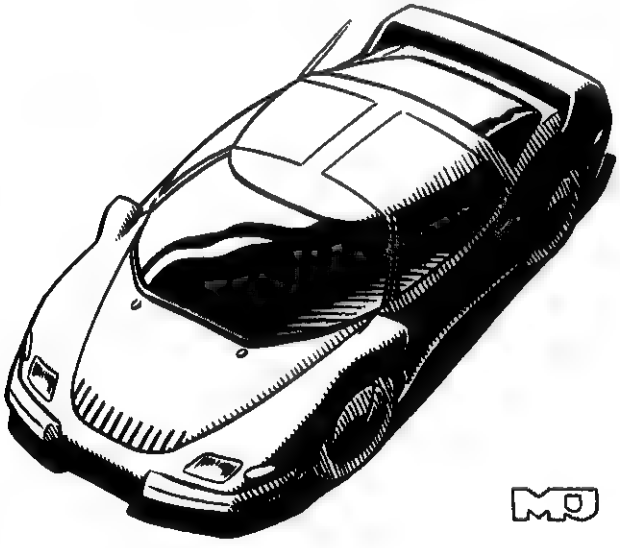
Cyberware
Boosted Reflexes (2)
Cyberears (w/Hearing Amplification, Select Sound Filter (4), Recorder Interface)
Dr. Spott Smartcam*
Eyecrafter Opticam Package
Headware Memory (200 Mp)
Smartgun Link

Gear
2 Line Taps
Ares Predator II [Heavy Pistol, SA, 15 (clip), 10M, w/3 clips of APDS ammo, internal smartlink]
Armor Jacket (5/3)
Auxiliary Memory Module (1,000 Mp)*
AZT Micro20 Microcamcorder*
Bug Scanner (6)
Data Codebreaker (5)
DocWagon Contract (Platinum)

Fine Clothing
General Products Steadicam™ Shoulder Mount*
Honda-GM 3220 ZX Turbo (see below for statistics)
Ingram Smartgun [SMG, SA/BF, 32 (clip), 7M, w/3 clips of regular ammo, Internal Smartlink]
Jammer (5)
Lined Coat (4/2)
Micro-recorder
Pocket Computer w/100 Mp of Memory
Pocket Vidphone (w/pop-up screen)
Secure Short-haul Transmitter*
Signal Locator (w/2 Tracking Signals)
Sony CB-5000 Cybercam*
Video Maintenance Kit*
Voice Identifier (3)

*Statistics appear in **Shadowbeat.**





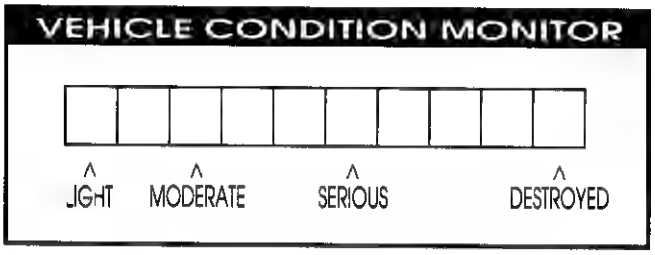
HONDA-GM 3220 ZX TURBO

The cheapest sports car on the road in North America today. Targa top (hardtop inserts clip to rear luggage tray), turbo-boosted engine, bucket seats, mag wheels, high-speed suspension, and exceptional road-holding make the 3220 ZX Turbo the budget sports-car freak's dream. This baby boasts the engine that won the NorAm Sports Car Circuit Gold Cup for Honda in 2047 and 2048!

Handling	Speed	B/A	Sig	APilot
4/8	50/150	2/0	1	2

Seating: Front/rear twin bucket seats*
Access: 2 standard/open top + rear hatch
Economy: 45 km per liter
Fuel: IC/30 liters
Storage: 4 CF trunk

*Rear bucket seats are undersized.



JACK DREW

Jack Drew is a muscular black man of average height, with collar-length black hair and gray eyes. He has a wide face and wider smile that matches his easygoing, null-perspiration sense of humor. A fixer by trade, he has recently acted more often in the capacity of a Johnson, and feels his career sliding in that direction.

He does not know who hired him for the kidnapping and has no desire to find out. He has access to a cash account to outfit and support the mission and has an e-mail address for contacting his employer if needed, but that's it. He does his best to assist the runners in getting settled and acclimated, and they might even convince him to drive them around or watch Shawn for awhile, but he is not a member of this team and will not fight except to defend himself.

Attributes
Body: 4
Quickness: 3
Strength: 5
Charisma: 5
Intelligence: 4
Willpower: 4
Essence: 1.4
Reaction: 3

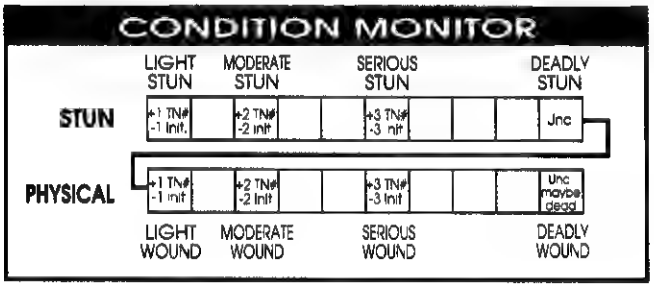
Skills
Computer: 3
Electronics: 3
Etiquette (Corporate): 3
Etiquette (Street): 4
Firearms: 3
Negotiations: 6

Initiative: 3 + 2D6
Threat/Professional Rating: 3/3

Special Skills
Appraisal of High Tech Items: 6
Equipment Acquisition: 4

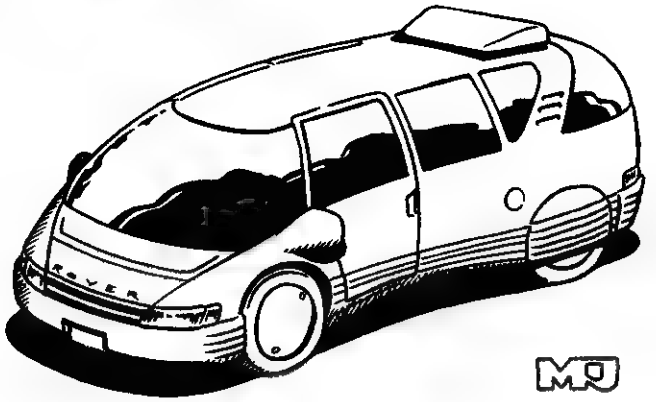
Cyberware
Boosted Reflexes (1)
Cybereyes w/Thermographic Vision
Datajack
Headware Memory (300 Mp)

Gear
DocWagon Contract (Basic)
Fichetti 500a [Light Pistol, SA, 25 (c), 2 clips regular ammo, Laser Sight]
Leyland-Rover Transport Medium Van (see below for statistics)
Lined Coat (4/2)
Pocket Secretary
Saab Dynamit 776TI (see below for statistics)



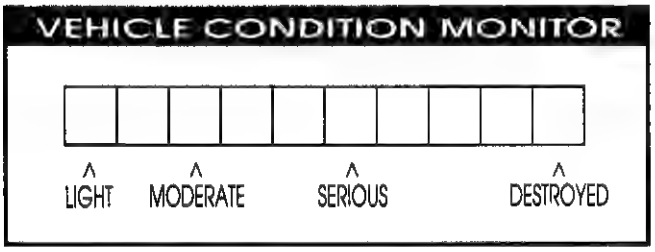
LEYLAND ROVER TRANSPORT MEDIUM VAN

This medium-sized van is a common sight on the streets of many of the more cosmopolitan UCAS, CFS, and CAS cities. The vehicle comes in many different configurations, all built around the same chassis and all able to use the same basic parts. The Minibus variant is especially popular with corporations as transportation for low- and mid-level employees. The Enclosed-Box Cab model is also popular with many delivery services. Jack Drew uses the Minibus model, with the modifications shown below.



Handling	Speed	B/A	Sig	APilot
4/8	35/105	5/15	0	4

Seating: Twin front bucket seats, plus 9 folding benches (reconfigurable)
Access: 2 front standard, 1 double-sized on the passenger side, and 1 rear hatch
Cargo: Varies with position and number of seats
Notes: Anti-theft system (Rating 6), APPS™ system, turbo-charged high-performance engine, improved suspension (–2), passive aural masking (4), mobile telecom system, runflat tires, upgraded Armor (+15), upgraded Body (+2). (Rules for special accessories appear in the **Rigger Black Book**. Gamemasters without that sourcebook may ignore any accessories that are not self-explanatory.)



SAAB DYNAMIT 776TI

Winner of the famous Euro-Rally Production Sports Circuit from 2045–49, the Saab is a state-of-the-art, turbo-charged sportscar for serious speed freaks. Standard features include roll bars, improved suspension, APPS™, a complete mobile communications suite with an optional satellite uplink, a stereo system, and a convertible top, all connected to the most powerful production engine on the market. Jack Drew drives an off-the-lot, white and blue model.

Handling	Speed	B/A	Sig	APilot
4/8	80/250	2/3	1	3

Seating: Twin front bucket seats, plus one small rear bench
Access: 2 front standard, plus open top
Cargo: Small trunk (about 1 cubic meter)
Notes: Anti-theft system (Rating 6), APPS™ system, mobile telecom system, roll cage, runflat tires.

VEHICLE CONDITION MONITOR

LIGHT MODERATE SERIOUS DESTROYED

AVERAGE PEOPLE

At various times throughout **Divided Assets,** the runners may bump into those archetypal "average people" who just happen to be nearby (or in the way). They are part of the 99 percent of the population that has no cyberware, rarely sees magic, and will probably see an actual dragon a grand total of twice in their lives. At most, they've seen a few metatypes aside from their own (but hasn't everybody?).

Their statistics appear below, broken down by metatype where appropriate.

	Human	Elf	Dwarf	Ork	Troll
Attributes					
Body	3	3	4	6	8
Quickness	3	4	2	3	2
Strength	3	3	5	5	7
Charisma	3	5	3	2	1
Intelligence	3	3	3	2	1
Willpower	3	3	4	3	2
Essence	6	6	6	6	6
Reaction	3	3	2	2	1

Initiative: Reaction + 1D6
Threat/Professional Rating: 1/1

Special Skills
Professional Skill (gamemaster's choice): 3

Gear
Normal Clothing

CORPORATE/SECURITY DECKER

If an NPC corporate or security decker is needed at any point during this adventure, use the generic game statistics given below and apply any Threat/Professional Ratings listed in the appropriate encounters.

Attributes
Body: 2
Quickness: 3
Strength: 1
Charisma: 1
Intelligence: 4
Willpower: 3
Essence: 5.8
Reaction: 3

Initiative: 5 + 1D6 (varies with Threat Rating)
Threat/Professional Rating: As assigned in encounters; also see **Skills.**

Skills
Computer: 5
Computer Theory: 4
Etiquette (Corporate): 2
Etiquette (Matrix): 4

Gear
Cyberdeck with enough Active Memory to use all programs in memory (see statistics below)

CYBERDECK STATISTICS

MPCP
2 x decker's Professional Rating
Persona Program Ratings
1.5 x Professional Rating
Hardening
Equal to Professional Rating
Response Increase
+2/+1D6 for every 2 points of Threat Rating (maximum +6/+3D6)
Utilities
Choose a number from each group below equal to the decker's Professional Rating. All ratings for these utilities are 1.5 x the decker's Professional Rating.
Combat/Defense: Attack, Medic, Mirrors, Shield, Slow, Smoke
Sensor/Masking: Analyze, Browse, Deception, Decrypt, Evaluate, Relocate, Sleaze

PLAYER HANDOUTS

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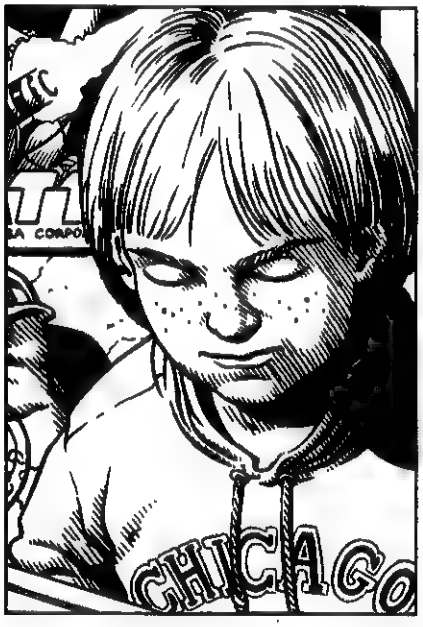

The SUBJECT, SHAWN BRYAN GAFFNEY, is an eight-year-old male (DOB: 17 June 2047), 121 cm in height and 21 kgs in weight, with light brown/sandy brown hair and hazel eyes. He was born in Chicago, Illinois (UCAS) to COLIN GAFFNEY (FATHER) and ANNA COLERIDGE-GAFFNEY (MOTHER) and is their only child.

The SUBJECT currently resides in the Brandis Development, Sioux Sector, Front Range Free Zone (DENVER), having moved with his MOTHER following the extraction of FATHER from control of the elder Gaffneys' mutual employer, Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services (FAFS). The attempt to remove SUBJECT from the control of FAFS at the same time as FATHER'S extraction was foiled by misfortune. To prevent further damage, FAFS transferred MOTHER and SUBJECT to the more secure DENVER site.

The SUBJECT resides in a multi-room condominium (CONDO) located in the Brandis Development, a multi-corporate residential enclave within the Sioux Council Sector. The CONDO site is amenities-inclusive, requiring SUBJECT to leave the premises only to attend the Shining Bright School (SCHOOL), located in the Pueblo Corporate Council Sector, on a daily basis (excluding weekends) and also for twice-weekly (Tuesday and Thursday evening at 5:00 PM) psycho-therapeutic sessions with Martin Singtree (THERAPIST) as part of ongoing treatment for post-traumatic stress syndrome resulting from the failed extraction. The SUBJECT is known to have friends within the CONDO, but it is not known if he has any attachments at the SCHOOL.

Based on Chicago school records and inferences from the DENVER SCHOOL site, SUBJECT'S grade-performance is noted as "average," despite a ranking of 221 (forty-seven points above average) on an NIEE (Native Intelligence Evaluation Exam) battery sixteen months ago. SUBJECT has been evaluated as having a learning-directed attention-focus deficiency.

School records also show no extra-academic interests beyond an "above-average, but not dominant" interest in computers/technology. His psychological profile shows him to be inquisitive but introverted, contemplative but prone to occasional bursts of undirected anger and lacking in basic age-oriented interpersonal abilities.

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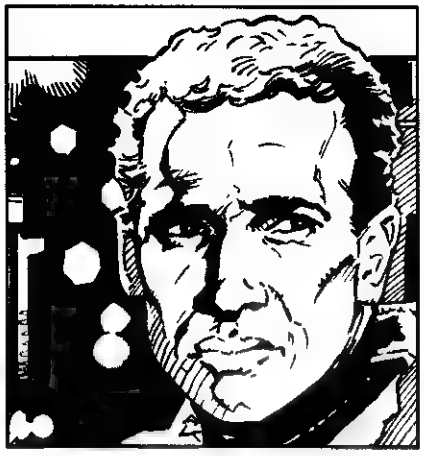

SUBJECT'S FATHER, Colin Gaffney, is a thirty-five-year-old economic statistician known for work in demand-event curve theorems and multi-yield acquisition practices. He is a "Distinguished" graduate of the Roos Institute for Pan-Economic Studies in London and is a frequent contributor to the online source *Adaptive Economic Theory*. FATHER is tall, of light build, with short dark hair flecked with gray, and favors conservative business suits. Known hobbies/interests are believed to include statistical population evaluation and currency-market appreciation. Coworker evaluations describe him as "intense," "brooding," "self-absorbed," "domineering," "hostile," and "a cold fish."

Since his extraction from FAFS, FATHER has been in the employ of Dassum Security and Investments (DSI) based in Seattle (UCAS). He is believed to head a focused-project group in the area of multi-acquisition theory and practice.

SUBJECT'S MOTHER, Anna Coleridge-Gaffney, is a thirty-eight-year-old, multi-market analyst/counselor with Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services. She earned her degree from the Manhattan-based Milken Securities University, where she also studied pan-corporate investment theory; she frequently gives virtual lectures on that subject. MOTHER is tall and of average to medium build, with shoulder-length, dark red hair and dark green eyes. She also favors neo-conservative business suits. Known hobbies/interests are believed to include adaptive market strategies and fine art criticism. Coworker evaluations describe her as "intimidating," "obsessive," "demanding," "bossy," "humorless," and "caustic."

Since the extraction of FATHER from FAFS, MOTHER has remained in the employ of FAFS but has been moved to an allegedly more secure facility in the Sioux Council Sector of the Front Range Free Zone (Denver), where she fulfills the same duties and responsibilities as she did in Chicago prior to her husband's defection.

The Gaffneys' agreement with FAFS was allegedly a family-combined contract (CONTRACT) which extended coverage and accountability to all current (at the time of signing, only MOTHER and FATHER) and future (SUBJECT) family members. It is unclear how FATHER's defection violated the terms of that employment contract, how it has affected MOTHER's standing at FAFS, or how it will impact SUBJECT's long-term position within the corporate structure.

Assignment

SUBJECT is to be removed from the control of Fuchs-Auberlien Financial Services and delivered into the hands of our designated representatives at the earliest possible convenience, with little or no strain, stress, or trauma placed on the SUBJECT while the transfer of control takes place.

Payment for said assignment is 50,000 nuyen for the team (25,000 nuyen upon acceptance of assignment, 25,000 nuyen on acceptance of transfer of SUBJECT). Transportation into the Front Range Free Zone will be provided, along with ONE set of temporary, false identification papers per team member valid for the duration of this assignment. Additional funding not to exceed 15,000 nuyen will be provided for transportation and supplies related to this assignment as necessary. Strict accounting and arrangements for said equipment may be made only through our representative on-site.

Additionally, SUBJECT must be isolated and contained for a period of two to four days following SUBJECT's removal from the control of FAFS. Team will be exclusively responsible for SUBJECT's protection and well-being during that time. SUBJECT must also be immediately accessible and presentable at all times for pre-arranged transfer to SEATTLE.

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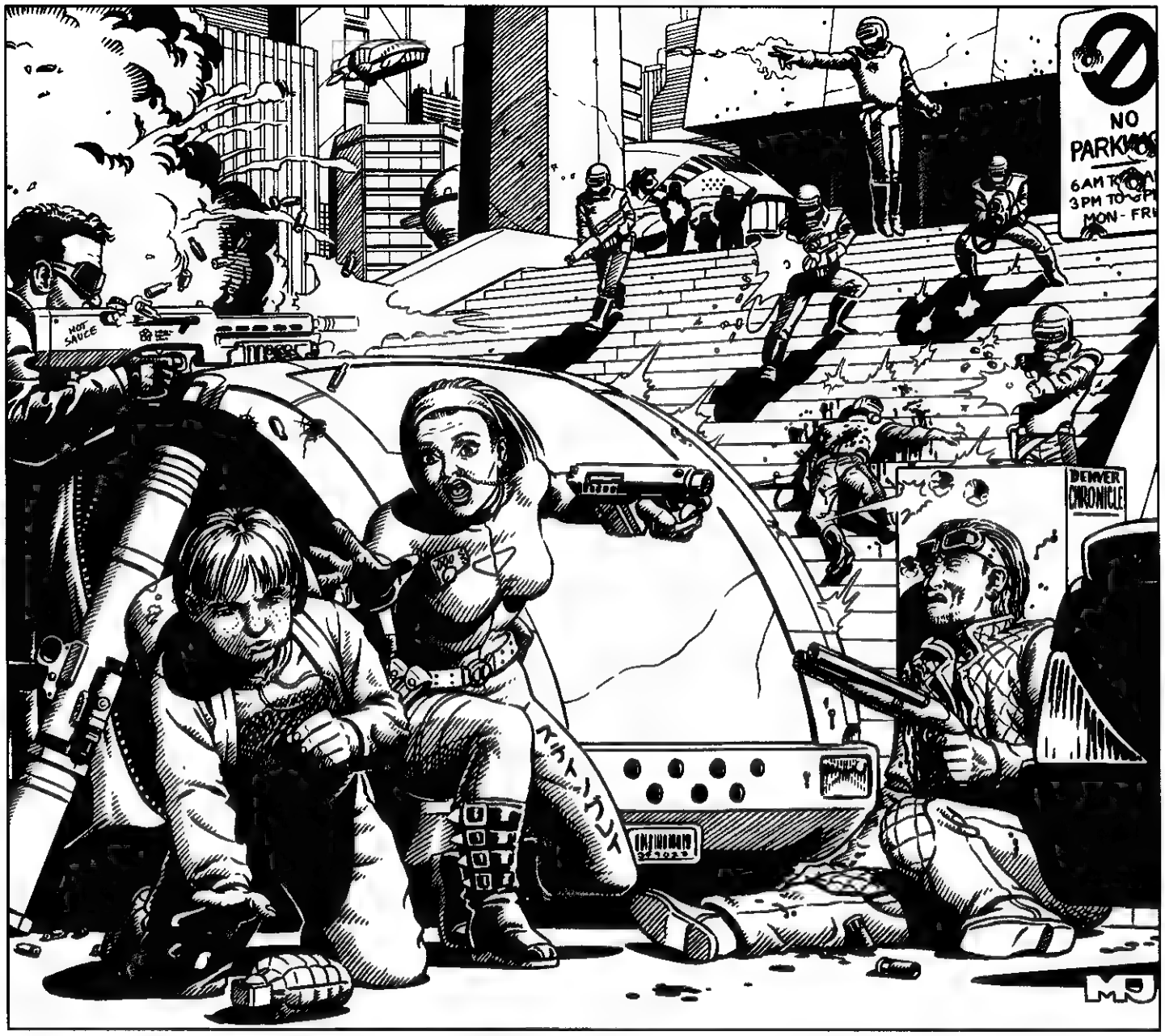
EVENT TIMELINE

TIME ELAPSED	EVENT
DAY ONE	
00:00	Shawn is kidnapped. The clock starts ticking.
00:15	Knight Errant begins its official investigation.
00:30	Anna arrives at the Brandis Development (if she is not already there) under heavy KE protection.
01:30	A KE forensic magic team arrives at the crime scene and searches it for blood or other body fluids/parts left behind by the runners.
	KE combat mages begin a ritual-magic search for Shawn Gaffney.
04:00	Corp X contacts Anna and informs her of their demands. She tells no one.
05:30 (or before)	The material link portion of the ritual is complete. The Sending begins.
08:00	Audrey W. arrives in Denver and begins snooping.
	Shawn begins to wonder why no one is taking him to his father. He withdraws into silence.
10:00	Audrey W. airs her first broadcast on the boy's kidnapping. She blasts the runners for endangering the boy, creating a public safety hazard and so on. She also blasts Knight Errant and the appropriate local law enforcement agency (PSE, ESSI, or Lone Star) for letting it happen.
10:30 (or before)	The Sending portion of the ritual is complete, so KE may now know the runners' location. A KE mage follows the astral trail toward Shawn.
22:30 (or before)	The KE mage finds Shawn. KE deploys ground forces.
DAY TWO	
34:00	Audrey W. airs another report on the kidnapping. She includes the fact that the boy was undergoing therapy for trauma connected to his father's extraction. She worries that the kidnapping will make his problem worse. She also reports that Dassurn Securities and Investments denies any connection to the kidnapping.
38:00	Shawn begins to believe the runners are not going to take him to his father. He's afraid, but reveals little of his inner turmoil except when he speaks.
DAY THREE	
49:00	The fact that his mother is going to be mad at him begins to gnaw at Shawn. His discomfort is evident, but he does not speak of it unless one of the runners asks him about it. Unless the runners can keep him calm, he might trigger his DocWagon bracelet or phone home (if he still has access to either).
58:00	Audrey W. airs another report on the kidnapping, citing sources who told her that the shadowrunners hired were out-of-towners recruited specifically for the job. She also reports on the results of Knight Errant's efforts the day of the kidnapping. (This may be the first time the runners hear this information; present it in a way that makes them feel they escaped by the skin of their teeth.)
DAY FOUR	
70:00	The runners learn that Audrey W. wants to meet with them.
82:00	Audrey W. airs another report on the kidnapping, this time interviewing a shadowrunner allegedly connected to Colin Gaffney's extraction. His identity hidden, he reveals that Shawn Gaffney was never one of the targets. This knowledge makes Colin Gaffney the focus of Audrey's attacks. She also reports any developments in the local investigation.
92:00	Shawn, convinced no one wants him, becomes distraught and refuses to eat. If he has not used the DocWagon bracelet or tried to phone home, he tries one or the other in 1D6 hours.

EVENT TIMELINE

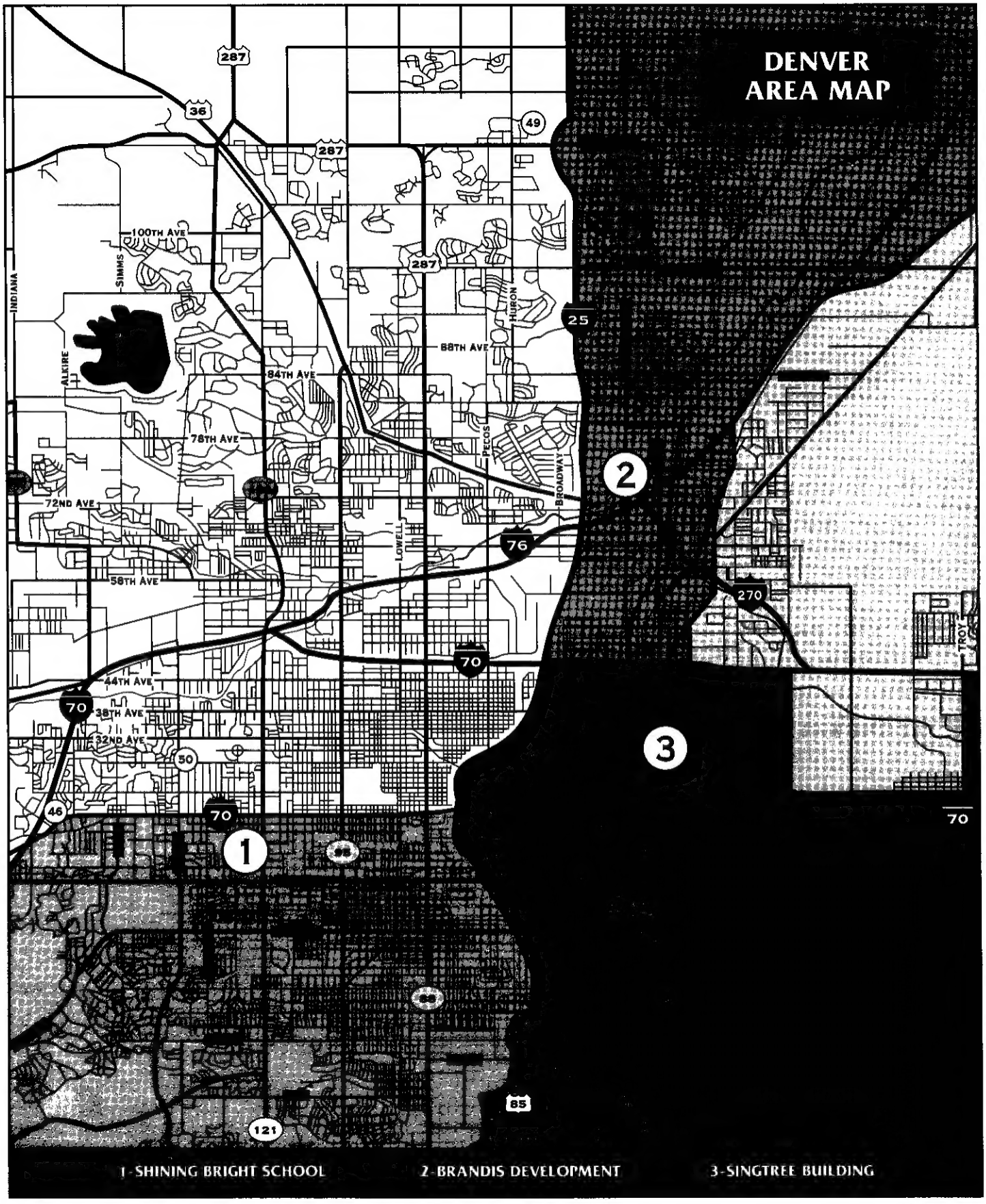


DAY FIVE

106:00	Audrey W. airs another report on the kidnapping, stating for the first time that there may be some question as to who's responsible for Shawn's disappearance. Her admittedly low-placed sources in Dassurn Securities and Investments assure her that the corp actually had nothing to do with the kidnapping. Audrey also reports any developments in the investigation.
117:00	Shawn decides he doesn't want to go home.

DAY SIX

128:00	Audrey W. airs another report on the kidnapping, claiming to have information that the kidnappers have contacted Anna. She has no specifics of their demands or Anna's response. She also reports any developments in the investigation.
130:00	Anna tells Corp X "no deal."
132:00	Corp X tells the runners the deal is off and instructs them to turn the boy loose.


DENVER
AREA MAP
287
36
49
100TH AVE
SIMMS
INDIANA
ALKIRE
84TH AVE
78TH AVE
72ND AVE
58TH AVE
44TH AVE
38TH AVE
32ND AVE
HURON
88TH AVE
PECOS
BROADWAY
LOWELL
25
76
270
TROY
70
50
46
1
2
3
85
121
1-SHINING BRIGHT SCHOOL
2-BRANDIS DEVELOPMENT
3-SINGTREE BUILDING

LAYERED MATRIX SYSTEM

Divided Assets offers a variant of the **Shadowrun** Matrix system designed to speed up game play and the resolution of actions in cyberspace. This variant, called the layer system, may or may not represent a permanent change to the Matrix system. FASA would like to hear your opinion on the matter, so please drop us a postcard and let us know if you liked this particular variation. Gamemasters more comfortable with the standard Matrix rules should feel free to construct a full Matrix map for any of the systems described in this adventure and resolve all interaction with those systems using standard rules.

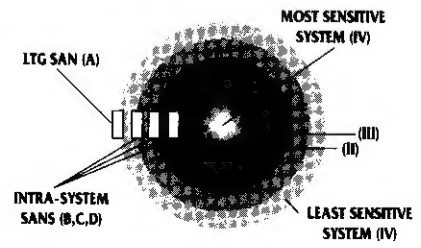
These variant Matrix rules are intended to create a freer environment for both the decker and the gamemaster. Relationships between elements of the Matrix are abstracted, and movement between nodes requires only a simple command rather than a tedious trip through a series of intervening nodes.

Gamemasters and players are encouraged to describe the physical appearance of the Matrix in the manner they like best. If the interior terrain of an SPU, for example, is fleshed out and defined, that terrain's advantages and disadvantages are easily used by all concerned. If a decker dives for cover behind some element of the SPU, give her the appropriate bonus for that cover, but make her counterattacks more difficult to pull off, and so on. The action should be fast and furious, leaving the character little time to think.

ABOUT THE LAYER SYSTEM

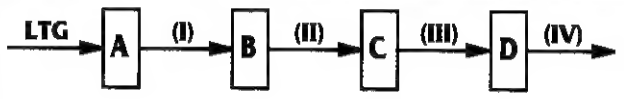
Each computer system is defined in terms of its *layers*, which are accessible via SANs (System Access Nodes). The SANs act as bridges between the layers and to other systems. Each layer is described in terms of its appearance, contents, and security. No system map is required. The spatial relationships between the various nodes in a layer, such as subprocessors, datastores, I/O ports, and even that layer's CPU, become irrelevant in this system. Only their presence matters.

SYSTEM MODEL 1



The diagram for System Model 1 shows a four-layer system. The outer layer (I) contains the least sensitive areas and nodes. An intruding decker can reach this layer simply by passing through the first SAN (A), which leads to and from the LTG where the system is located. If, however, the decker wishes to penetrate the most sensitive layer (IV), he would have to pass through three others (SANs B, C, and D) to get there. The setup would be diagrammed as shown below.

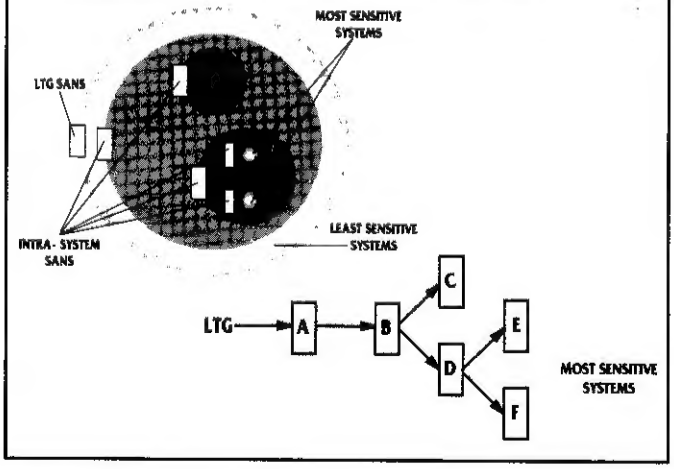
SAN-PATH DIAGRAM



In most systems, the overall security of the LTG SAN is higher than that of the intra-system SANs, though some corporations also place heavy security in a SAN leading to a sensitive layer.

Though the System Model 1 diagram shows even layering, the evenness is not required and is in fact rare in all but the simplest systems. A more common layering scheme might look something like the System Model 2 diagram.

SYSTEM MODEL 2



It is also possible for a layer to have a SAN leading to another layer elsewhere in the system that it is not directly touching. For example, in the System Model 2 layer diagram, Layer III might contain a SAN leading directly to Layer VI even though those two do not touch in the diagram.

DEFINING THE LAYERS

Each layer has four defining characteristics: External Path, Internal Path, Contents/Description, and Security/Defense.

External Path

The external path indicates the presence and particulars of any datapaths leading from one system to another. The RTG/LTG/Telecom number is listed where relevant. The description of a system's external path also states whether or not a SAN is present and that SAN's security code, and what IC is present (if any). Note that hardwired paths have no IC of any kind. This description may or may not include additional notes concerning the nature of the path.

Internal Path

The internal path includes any SANs or hardwired datapaths from parts of the system to other parts. The description of these paths includes the subsystem they enter from, the relevant security code, and what IC is present (if any), as well as any relevant additional notes concerning the nature of the paths.

Contents/Description

This section describes the subsystems and/or nodes in the layer in question. CPUs, SPUs, datastores, I/O ports, and so on are nodes. Subsystems are particular nodes directly connected to and served by an SPU (datastores, slave nodes, and so on). The description also notes whether or not the layer or any part of it uses the Universal Matrix Specifications (UMS) image/icon set (standard, color-coded polygons) or if the layer is sculpted to some degree (in which case it appears as another environment, at varying levels of detail). Individual subsystems and nodes not described in detail are considered to have an inconsequential presence and are assumed to lack security codes or protection. Detailed descriptions of nodes and subsystems includes the presence of any important data relevant to the adventure, and sometimes security codes and IC, and additional information pertaining to each subsystem or node.

Security/Defenses

This section describes each layer's security programs or countermeasures beyond those associated with individual nodes or subsystems, such as roving or autonomous IC, security deckers, and so on.

FINDING THINGS

Now for the big question: without a system map, how do the decker and the gamemaster know the location of the information or system in question? The gamemaster knows because he has seen the complete text describing the system. The decker has to hunt for the information he or she wants, and so must be in the same layer as the appropriate node or subsystem.

To find a node or subsystem with a listed security code, the decker must make a successful Sensor Test using that security code as a target number. Hacking Dice may be used for this test, up to a maximum number of dice equal to the rating of the cyberdeck's MPCP. If the test is successful, the decker has detected the node in question and identified it by type (SPU, datastore, and so on) but not purpose (he or she gains no information about what the node does). Each attempt to find a node or subsystem requires a Complex Action and can only be performed by a decker in observation range within the layer (for a definition of observation range, see **Perception in the Matrix**, p. 64).

If multiple nodes or subsystems are present in the layer, the decker makes one Sensor Test and compares the results against the security codes of all of the nodes and subsystems. The number and type of nodes or sub-systems identified depends on the number of successes achieved; for example, a decker who generates 4 successes can identify all Orange nodes and/or subsystems, but no Red ones (per standard rules for breaking security codes, p. 165, **SR II**).

A decker may make multiple attempts to locate a node or subsystem if he or she knows it exists but has failed to find its exact location. Each additional attempt takes only time (a Complex Action); no additional target number modifiers apply. For all intents and purposes, the decker is assumed to be in the SAN while making these attempts because he or she can only observe the entire layer from the SAN or the layer CPU.

Nodes or subsystems that do not have security codes listed are automatically visible without a Sensor Test. Nodes or subsystems directly connected to a node are invisible until the decker enters that node.

The decker can locate IC and other personas as well, but only if they lie within observation range. To find IC, the decker makes a Sensor Test against the security code of the layer's CPU. To spot another decker, the first decker makes his or her Sensor Test against the Masking rating of the other decker's cyberdeck. Until identified, IC and other personas appear as question marks. (When describing them for players, keep in mind that every piece of IC and every persona will look like a different kind of question mark.)

Recognizing Things

Once a decker identifies a node, subsystem, IC, or another decker, he or she must determine the identified object's purpose. To do this, the decker must move into sensor range and use an Analyze program per the standard Matrix rules.

MOVING AROUND

Because the layer system dispenses with the need for a Matrix/system map, the gamemaster must abstract the decker's movement within a layer. Use the following rules in place of the **Matrix Movement** rules on p. 47, **Virtual Realities**.

Deckers can move freely in and out of nodes and subsystems that have no security codes, but doing so requires a Free Action and can only be done during the decker's Combat Phase. Entering a node or subsystem with a security code requires the decker to make a successful Computer Test against the security code in question and takes a Simple Action. Hacking dice may be used for this test, up to a maximum number of dice equal to the character's Computer Skill rating.

In general, a decker can move from one node or subsystem to another simply by declaring his or her intention to do so and expending the required action. If a test is required but is unsuccessful, the decker does not move from his original location. From a layer's CPU, however, the decker can move to any node, regardless of whether or not it has a security code, without making a Computer Test. For more information, see **CPU, Systems Operations,** p. 166 of **SRII** and p. 11 of **Virtual Realities**.

Following Things

Following a persona or piece of IC requires a successful Sensor Test against the Evasion Rating of the cyberdeck (in the case of a persona), or the security code of the layer's CPU (in the case of IC). Hacking dice may be used for this test, up to a maximum number of dice equal to the MPCP rating of the decker's cyberdeck. Apply a +1 modifier to the target number for every Combat Phase that passes between the time the persona or IC shifted location and the time of the test. The following decker may make only one such attempt, requiring a Simple Action. The decker doing the following need not be present in the same node or subsystem the target exited at the time of the target's departure to make the test.

Changing Ranges

Declaring and changing ranges occurs per standard rules (p. 177, **SRII**). To change ranges requires a Simple Action.

RULES CHANGES AND NOTES

The following minor rules changes and notes apply when using the layered Matrix system. References to **Shadowrun, Second Edition** (**SRII**) and **Virtual Realities** (**VR**) appear where appropriate.

Central Processing Unit, Systems Operations
(p. 166, SRII; pp. 11–12, VR)

A decker who wants a system map while in the CPU should instead be given a list of the nodes and subsystems present in the layer in question and the appropriate security codes. The gamemaster then describes the system as noted in the rules for the **See System** command for CPUs (described on p. 11, **VR**). The restrictions on the number of nodes a given CPU may serve or control, also described on p. 11, **VR**, serve to limit the number of nodes and/or subsystems present in any given layer.

NODE CONNECTIONS

(pp. 166–67, SRII)

Use the existing notes on node connections as a guideline for the types of nodes that can be connected, rather than as a tool for designing system maps.

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS

(p.168, SRII)

Standard rules apply, except that for any test the decker may use a maximum number of Hacking Pool dice equal to the decker's Computer Skill rating. If no security code exists for a node or subsystem, no Computer Test is required to enter that node or subsystem; the operation simply occurs. System operations require only a Simple Action.

PERCEPTION IN THE MATRIX

(p. 177, SRII)

Observation range is the default range. The decker recieves a description of a given layer from the gamemaster, but cannot recognize or identify specific nodes or subsystems in that layer. In other words, the decker knows about the layer's general appearance and configuration but not its various specific elements.

In systems using the Universal Matrix Specification icon/image set, all nodes and subsystems appear as generic question-mark icons ("?") until the decker identifies them by means of a successful Sensor Test. (see **Finding Things**, p. 63).

MATRIX ACTIONS

(p.178, SRII)

The decker may take the following possible actions in addition to the Matrix Actions.

Free Action: Move to a node/subsystem with no security code (only during the decker's Combat Phase; see **Moving Around**, above).

Simple Action: Follow a persona or IC to another node/subsystem (see **Following Things**, above), or move to a node/subsystem with a security code (see **Moving Around**, above).

Complex Action: Identify node/subsystem (see **Finding Things**, p. **63**).

SYSTEM LOAD

(p. 14–15, VR)

As always, the gamemaster may choose to use or ignore the System Load rules. Keep in mind, however, that implementing them in a layer-based system may prove particularly difficult.